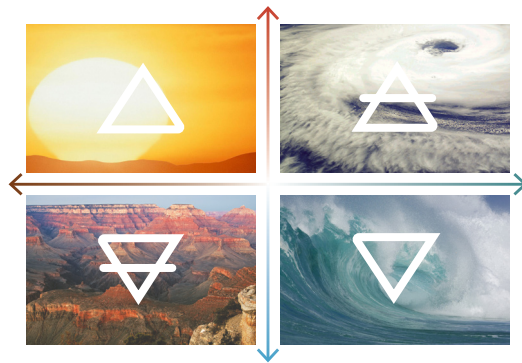


# EMBRACE THE ELEMENTS

A BRAND-CONSISTENCY AND PRODUCT-INNOVATION STRATEGY  
FOR BOARDSPORT LIFESTYLE BRAND BRUNOTTI



**Master Graduation Report**



A.K. (Arne) Hutter  
Delft University of Technology  
Brunotti Europe B.V.

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FOR BOARDSPORT LIFESTYLE BRAND BRUNOTTI

## Graduation Report

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# PREFACE

During my master, I have performed projects for several companies together with other students. The projects were mainly in the field of research, and strategy- and service design. Though I very much enjoyed doing these projects, and they all contributed to my growth as a strategic designer, I missed designing tangible solutions. In other words, I missed inventing products.

I therefore looked for a product-driven company to commission my graduation project. To be more precise, I looked for a strategic challenge that asked for tangible solutions. Via a fellow student, I got in contact with boardsport lifestyle brand Brunotti. During the first company meeting, it became clear that Brunotti was looking for product innovations to tackle potential brand inconsistencies. It was therefore a perfect fit.

My designer instinct immediately recognised the typical fuzzy-front-end character of the challenge. In this so-called fuzzy-front-end, I am most comfortable and of most value for the client. The open and fuzzy character of the proposed challenge gave me enough steering on the one hand, but left plenty of room for shaping my own project and proposing truly creative solutions on the other hand.

Whereas fuzzy-front-end design projects directly relate to the Strategic Product Design Master curriculum, I

set an extra personal project goal of building a working prototype once again. I have always liked doing so, but did not get the chance in the last few years. Moreover, I personally believe that such designer-skills set us apart from strategic business students.

I look back on a smooth and especially fun project. More importantly, I am confident that my proposed strategy, corresponding innovative product ideas, and working prototype contribute to achieving the project goals. For that, I would like to thank some people in particular (see next page).

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to start with a big thanks to my TU Delft supervisory team and company mentors for all ensuring a good course of this project in their own way.

Thank you Maria (chair, TU Delft supervisory team), for giving me the confidence to manage my own project, but steer me in the right direction if needed. Also, thank you for being available, despite personal circumstances. Thank you Silje (mentor, TU Delft supervisory team), for our casual project meetings in which I could bring up any subject I wanted. Also, thank you for constantly telling me that I did better than many of your Bachelor students.

Thank you Joffrey and Cees (company mentors) both for trusting me with this assignment, for giving me so much freedom, and for making me feel valued. Thank your Joffrey in particular for your constant availability, critical but positive attitude, and making me feel part of your team despite the few times I was in Amersfoort. Thank you Cees in particular for your optimistic attitude, and interesting stories and examples from years of practical experience.

I want to thank some fellow students for making it feel like I was part of a group in this individual assignment. Thank you Leroy for carpooling and thorough discussions on our projects. Thank you Steven, Sarah, Simone, Ruben, Bianca and Josephine for being my graduation 'roomies' and offering mental, creative

and intellectual support throughout my whole project. Thank you Wouter, Anne, Antoine and Jorn for acting as experts on a boardsport lifestyle, and associated pains.

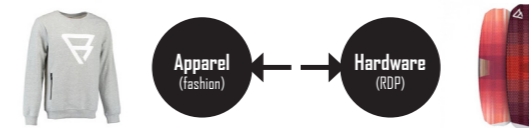
Also, I want to thank the PMB workshop staff for helping me with building my prototype. I would like to thank my friends and family in general for supporting me in so many ways, during this project and throughout my study. Thank you mom and dad for supporting me in all my needs during my study and Eline and Ward for being there, and borrowing your car to travel to Brunotti's headquarters.

Finally, I want to thank Marieke especially for being there all the way during my graduation. Thank you for being so involved in my project and listening to both my struggles and successes.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report comprises a strategical design graduation assignment, drafted for the Strategic Product Design master at the Delft University of Technology. The project is commissioned by boardsport lifestyle brand Brunotti.

## Project goal



The many differences between Brunotti's two product collections (boardsport hardware and boardsport lifestyle apparel) imply brand inconsistencies. This project aims to reveal these inconsistencies and, accordingly, propose a strategy that (1) helps eliminating the inconsistencies and (2) helps gaining competitive advantage.

## Literary substantiation

Literature confirms the importance of consistency for Brunotti by supporting that offering a wide variety of products has a positive effect on a brand's perception, but only if the overall message it embodies is consistent. Besides a brand's effort to convey a certain message, the customers' character proves to play an important role in how a brand is perceived and, as a result, how likely they are to accept brand extensions.

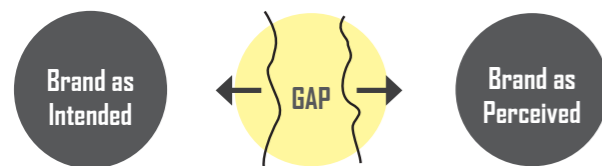
## Brand analysis



The message that Brunotti wants to convey can be traced back to its origin in many ways, despite the several major operational changes that the company has gone through. Whereas the brand was founded from a single man's (Claudio Brunotti) passion for windsurfing, it is now an internationally well-established corporate. Despite this large transformation, Brunotti stayed close to Claudio's love for boardsports and sense for fashion design and high-quality products.

At the very core of Brunotti's intended message are the values 'Authentic', 'Active', and 'Innovative'. 'Authenticity' embodies the brand's rich heritage, 'Active' embodies the boardsport lifestyle that the brand propagates, and 'Innovative' embodies the aim for technical products that set new standards. Secondly, at the core of Brunotti's identity is the philosophy 'No Matter The Conditions'. The philosophy calls to embrace the forces of the elements, the ever-changing weather conditions and unpredictable seasons. The third important part of Brunotti's intended message is the brand's desire of becoming a more premium brand. Being an premium brand typically means being well-known, taking position in the high-end of the market and conveying high-quality.

### Brand perception analysis



A quantitative research among Brunotti’s (potential) hardware and apparel customers is conducted in the form of an online questionnaire. The research is setup to reveal the gaps between Brunotti’s intended and the perceived message. Thus, it aims to disclose inconsistencies in what Brunotti wants to be and what they are in the eyes of the customer. Somewhat 200 responses reveal that the most critical inconsistencies (gaps) between Brunotti’s intended and perceived identity do not occur between the two customer segments (hardware and apparel), nor between the perception of the two product collections (hardware and apparel). The most critical gaps occur between the customers’ overall perception and Brunotti’s intentions in term of:

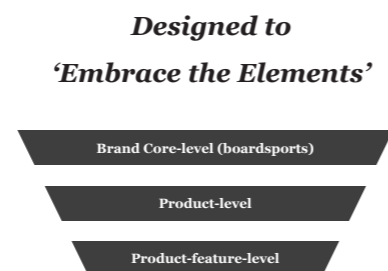
- **Quality.** The perceived quality is not low, but still consistently lower than intended. To reach a premium brand status, a higher perceived quality is desirable.
- **Innovative character.** The brand Brunotti and its products are perceived as far less innovative than intended. Being one of Brunotti’s core values, this sense of innovativeness needs to become much stronger in the minds of the customer.
- **Philosophy.** The brand perception analysis indicates a lower association with reliability and honesty than intended. This denotes a mismatch with Brunotti’s philosophy to support their customers ‘No Matter The Conditions’.

### The Solution Space

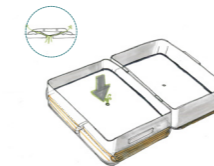


The solutions to closing the identified gaps are to exist in the solution space that derived from the brand perception analysis. This virtual space is where high quality and innovative product features, that are applicable to Brunotti hardware- and apparel products, support their customers’ lifestyle ‘No Matter The Conditions’.

Hereto, over a hundred boardsport lifestyle pains are identified in an exploratory session with four boardsport practitioners. To come up with innovative solutions for these pains, smart materials served as input for several creative problem-solving sessions. The ‘No Matter The Conditions’ philosophy is the final piece to the puzzle. From this philosophy, the ‘Embrace the Elements’ strategy emerged. The ‘Embrace the Elements’ strategy employs the four basic elements (sun, air, earth and water) to classify, not only the proposed product features, but also Brunotti’s products, and the boardsports that are the very reason for existence of the brand. In this way, Brunotti conveys a consistent message on all three levels, namely;

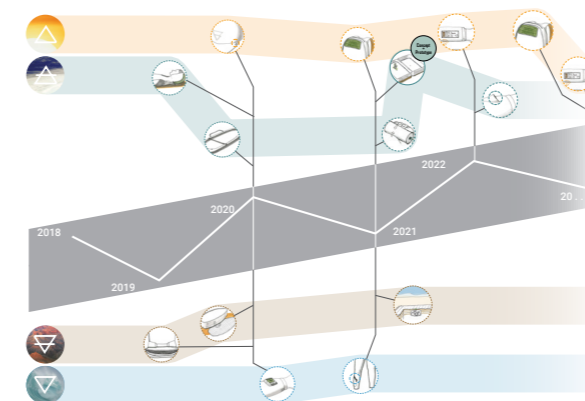


### Product-feature ideas



The strategy is employable to the brand-core-, and product-level through mere classification. How the strategy is employable on a product-feature level becomes concrete in the ideation phase of this project. A large number of - element - product feature ideas proved the versatility of the ‘Embrace the Element’ strategy. Some ideas are of course better than others. Therefore, a selection is made together with Brunotti’s Head of Design and Development Director. Moreover, one of the selected ideas is brought into a further stage of development and prototyped as a real-life showcase of the strategy’s capability of driving innovation.

### Strategic implementation



The applicability of the features to both product collections and planning are of great importance for the strategic implementation. An overview of the features’

applicability (to hardware and apparel products) helps showcasing their suitability for creating consistency throughout Brunotti’s product portfolio. Depending on the complexity of the idea and the readiness of the technology it holds, some ideas can be put to market quicker than others. Subsequently, a product feature-introduction-planning is proposed. Keeping Brunotti’s minimal develop period in mind, the first ‘Embrace the Elements’ strategy’s product features can be introduced to the market in 2020.

### Product-feature showcase



A prototype of an integrated vacuum compartment in a Brunotti trolley, that allows users to take more luggage, showcases an ‘air’-class innovative product. It showcases the strategy’s capability of driving innovation. Moreover, the prototype allows Brunotti to communicate the idea to manufacturers, and thus accelerates the development process.

### Finalisation

The report concludes with a confident note on the ‘Embrace the Elements’ strategy’s capability of achieving the project’s goals, depending on how well the strategy is implemented. It then gives some recommendation on the first steps to take for this implementation. Though some limitations in the research’ setup and distribution, and strategy’s implementation are identified, there is no reason to assume that they cancel out the value of the project’s outcomes.

# ABBREVIATION & GLOSSARY

<b>IDE</b>	Industrial Design Engineering
<b>PAG</b>	Problem as Given (by the company)
<b>NMTC</b>	No Matter The Conditions (brand philosophy)
<b>RDP</b>	Rider Develop Product
<b>TRL</b>	Technology Readiness Level
<b>CH.</b>	Chapter
<b>HQ</b>	Headquarters
<b>n.d.</b>	no date
<b>Nr.</b>	Number
<b>A-brand</b>	Premium brand (see CH. 03.04 for a detailed description)
<b>Applicability</b>	The extent to which it can be put to practical use on something
<b>Authentic</b>	Having an origin supported by unquestionable evidence *
<b>Bipolar scale</b>	A particular type of rating scale characterized by a continuum between two opposite end points *
<b>Boardsport</b>	Sport involving the use of a board as a vital part *
<b>Brand ...</b>	An overarching set of values, insight, or even vision that is leading in all company operations. (see CH. 01.02 for a detailed description)
<b>... awareness</b>	The extent to which (potential) customers are familiar with a brand's identity
<b>... identity</b>	What a brand is
<b>... message</b>	The conveyed brand identity
<b>... perception</b>	What a brand's identity is in the mind of the customer / what brand message is perceived by the customers
<b>... personality</b>	A brand's set of characteristics
<b>... philosophy</b>	What the brand stands for
<b>... reputation</b>	How good or bad the general perception of the brand is
<b>... intention</b>	The brand's intended identity/message
<b>Brunotti</b>	The company/brand
<b>Classification</b>	Dividing into groups according to certain characteristics
<b>Claudio (Brunotti)</b>	Brunotti company's founder
<b>Client</b>	Brunotti Europe B.V. (in particular, its Head of Design (Joffrey Delfgaauw) and Development Director (Cees van de Meeberg))

<b>Competitive advantage</b>	The conditions that make a business more successful than the businesses it is competing with *
<b>Consistency</b>	The quality of always behaving or performing in a similar way, or of always happening in a similar way *
<b>Customer</b>	The end-customer or consumer (not the retailers)
<b>Embrace</b>	To accept something enthusiastically *
<b>Generation X</b>	People born approximately between 1965 and 1980
<b>Generation Y</b>	People born approximately between 1980 and 1995
<b>Generation Z</b>	People born approximately after 1995
<b>Heritage</b>	The company's history and corresponding culture
<b>Implementation</b>	The act of putting something/a plan into action *
<b>Incremental</b>	A small (step)
<b>Innovation</b>	The use of a new idea or method *(see CH. 02.03 for a detailed description)
<b>Invention</b>	Something that has not yet been made before
<b>Likert scale</b>	A type of rating scale used to measure attitudes or opinions *
<b>Manufacturing price</b>	The price at which the manufacturing company sells something
<b>Name awareness</b>	The extent to which (potential) customers have heard of the brand
<b>Positioning</b>	How the brand's place in the market compares to similar brands
<b>Product offerings</b>	Every product that Brunotti offers for sale, described on several levels:  <b>1. Portfolio</b> A collective name for Brunotti's product offerings  <b>2. Collection</b> Either the Hardware (boardsport gear) or Apparel (lifestyle fashion) collection  <b>3. Category</b> Products that offer similar functionalities (e.g. waterwear)  <b>4. Type</b> Products that fulfil the same function (e.g. wetsuits)  <b>5. Product</b> A specific product (model, colour, etc.) (e.g. Brunotti Bravery 5/3 Red)  <b>6. Feature</b> A tangible function that a product holds (e.g. backzipper)
<b>Product reputation</b>	How good or bad the general perception of the brand's products is
<b>Rationale</b>	The reason for (raison d'être)
<b>Respondent</b>	Person that filled in the online questionnaire
<b>Selling price</b>	The price at which something is sold to the end-customer
<b>Showcase</b>	A concrete example to show the possibilities of something
<b>Smart materials</b>	Designed materials that have the ability to change in their environment *
<b>Strategy</b>	A way of achieving certain goals
<b>Unprompted</b>	Without being told to say or do something *
<b>Variety</b>	A different type of something *

\* Definition derived from online dictionary (CambridgeDictionary.com, YourDictionary.com or Dictionary.com)

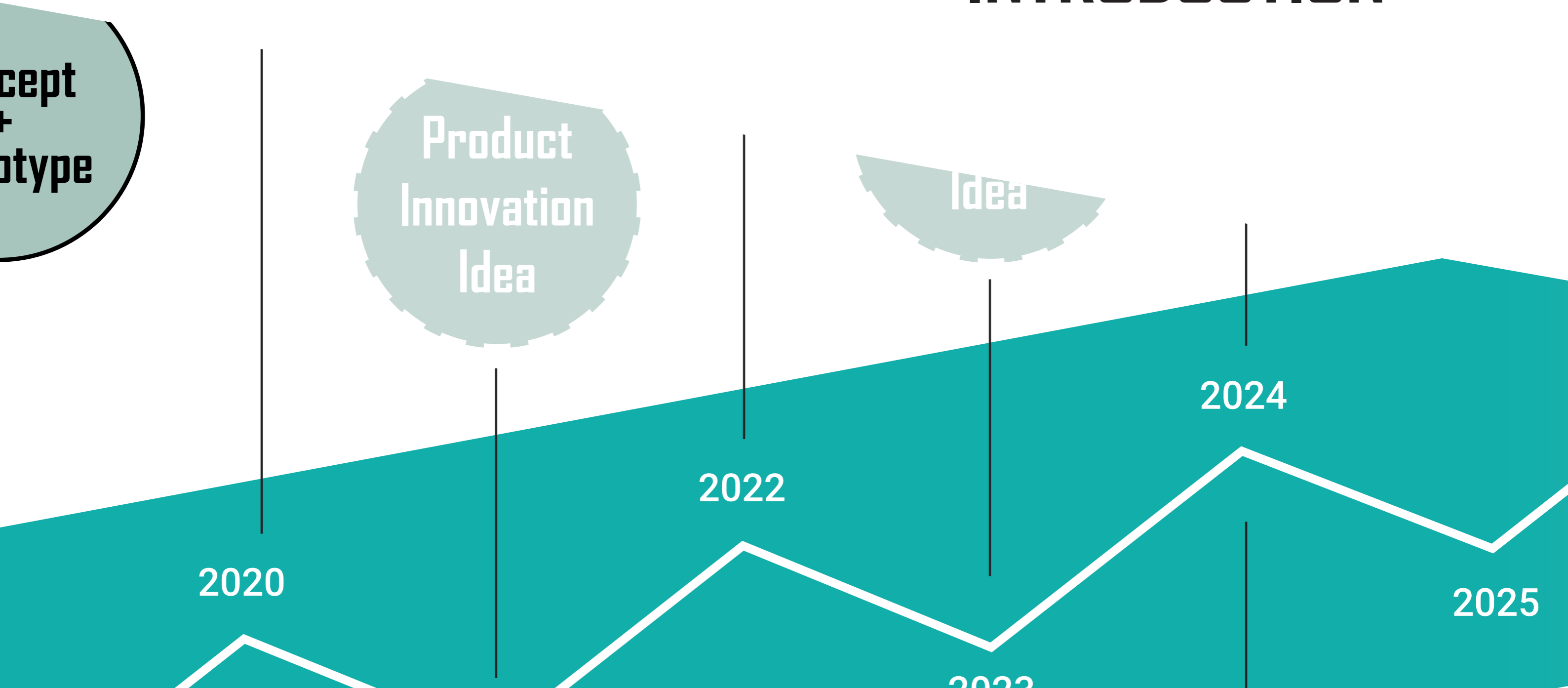
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# 01 INTRODUCTION





## CH. 01.01 PROJECT GOAL

The first piece for understanding the goal of this particular graduation assignment is the problem as given (PAG) by Brunotti (the client).

### 01.01.01 Problem as given

The problem as given by the client, is as followed:

Brunotti's product development is divided into Brunotti apparel and Brunotti hardware. The apparel product range covers a variety of winter and summer fashion items, such as shorts, bikinis, jackets, sweaters, tops and board shorts. The hardware range, on the other hand, covers a variety of highly technical products, such as boards, safety equipment, wetsuits, and other board sports equipment. Figure 13 on page 35 gives an overview of Brunotti's product portfolio. In its founding years Brunotti's hardware and apparel collection were clearly aligned. However, the two sides seem to have lost touch over time. As a result, inconsistency throughout Brunotti's product offerings occurs.

To understand how this problem originated and why this inconsistency is actually a problem, will be discussed extensively later in this report. First, the scope of the final deliverable of this project is discussed.

### 01.01.02 Scope of final deliverable

Brunotti set focus on creating consistency as a goal of this graduation assignment. They initially requested a design proposal, consisting of just one product or product feature, that would bridge their hardware- and apparel product collection. Furthermore, the proposal itself should offer competitive advantage. Being sceptical about the impact, that one product or feature can have on the consistency of Brunotti's entire product portfolio, the scope was extended to a 'product innovation strategy' as the final deliverable of this design challenge.

What this so-called product innovation strategy is, is graphically displayed in Figure 01. As the figure shows, this project's goal is to design a strategy, consisting of multiple product innovation ideas, that together contribute to more consistency in Brunotti's product offerings. To accelerate the market introduction of the strategic proposal, one idea is conceptualized and prototyped. The prototype will enable Brunotti to communicate with their manufacturers and, thus, start the development process.

Note that the ideas in Figure 01 are proposed over time. Though the figure indicate so, not exactly one product innovation will be proposed for every year. The figure merely indicates that the proposed time of introduction

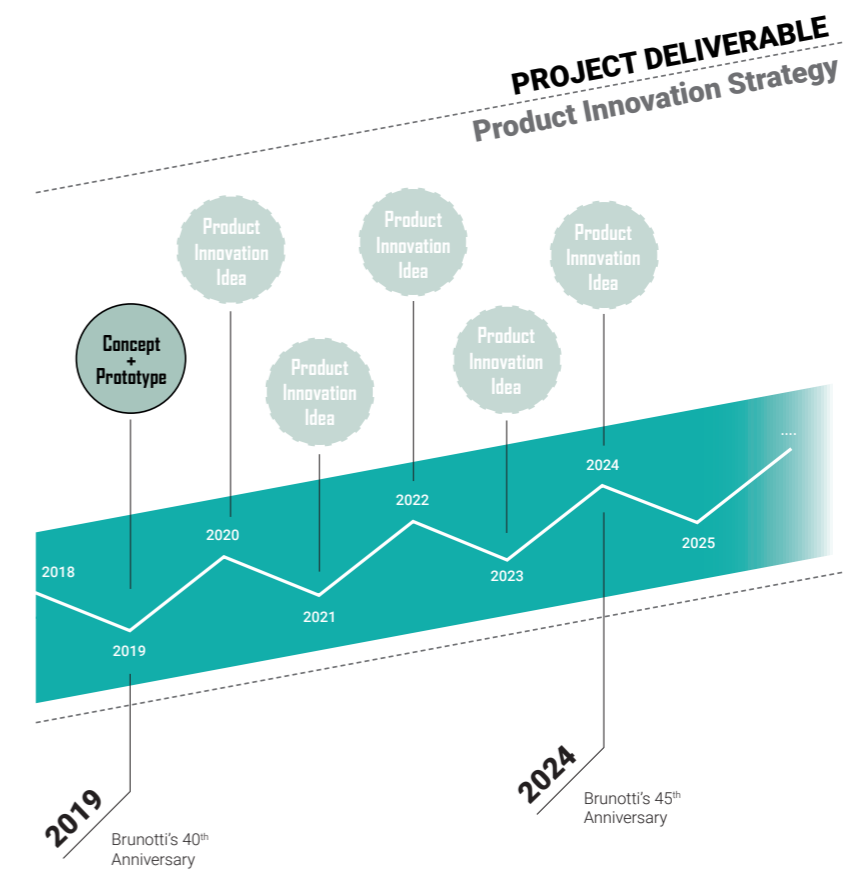


Figure 01. A graphical representation of this projects deliverable.

is part of the product innovation strategy. Also, note that Brunotti's next two anniversaries are indicated in Figure 01. They are potentially interesting as special moments of product introduction.

### 01.01.03 Problem level

As becomes clear from this goal description, and as requested by Brunotti, the solutions in this specific assignment are sought on a product-innovation level. This simply means that this projects focusses on how product innovation can help solving the found issues. However, this does not automatically mean that the expected inconsistency only occurs or finds its roots on a product level as well. To be more precise, 'consistency'

needs to exist on a brand level to help creating consistency on a product level. The problem's in this design challenge will therefore be treated on a brand level, rather than just the product level. The next chapter (CH. 01.02) goes into the meaning of a 'brand' and why this challenge asks for a brand-driven approach.

### 01.01.04 Conclusion

To conclude, the goal of this strategic product design assignment is to **reveal Brunotti's brand inconsistencies** and, accordingly, propose a product innovation strategy that (1) **helps eliminating these inconsistencies** and (2) **helps gaining competitive advantage**.

## CH. 01.02 BRAND DRIVEN APPROACH

To get an understanding of the problems at hand in this design challenge, it is important to clarify the meaning and function of a 'brand'. In many cases, when people talk about a brand, they refer to a company's logo or at best its communication identity as a whole (Abbing, 2010, p. 12). But a brand is much more than that and plays a vital role in all company operations. As Abbing (2010, p. 12) says, a brand carries a "set of values or insights, or it might even be a vision". The brand determines what a company does, why it does so, whom it does it for, etcetera. So the brand is pre-eminently the consistent factor in all company operations. This means that, in the end, the brand also determines the way a company develops new products and services. This is called: the innovation function of a brand (Figure 02).

So a brand can drive innovation, but how so? Abbing (2010, p. 82), distinguishes three ways in which a brand can do so (also, see Figure 03):

1. A brand can function as a source of inspiration for generating ideas.
2. A brand can serve as a guiding tool throughout an innovation process, protecting the 'brand fit'.
3. A brand can be utilised for filtering ideas and directions.

Thus, one should start with gaining a deep understanding of the brand at hand to cope with the problem as given and use it as a tool for driving innovation. The thorough brand-analysis, performed for this design project, will not only unveil the problem as given by the company, but also bring other problems on a brand-level to light.

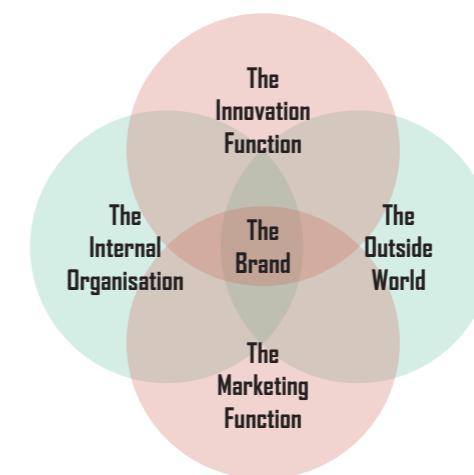


Figure 02. The brand connects (Abbing, 2010, p. 19)

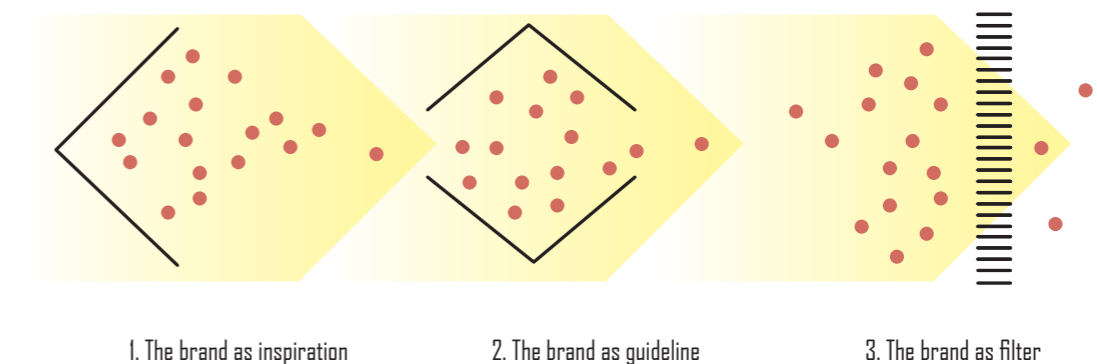


Figure 03. How brands drive innovation (Abbing, 2010, p. 82)



# 02 LITERATURE REVIEW

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## CH. 02.01 VARIETY IN PRODUCT OFFERINGS

As mentioned in CH. 01.01, the client indicated a lack of consistency in their product offerings. Brunotti focusses on the great variety of their product offering as the cause for inconsistency, saying their two main product collections (hardware & software) have somewhat lost touch over the years. Before diving into this given problem, the short literature review hereafter goes into both the negative and positive effect of a great variety in product offerings.

### **02.01.01 Negative effects of a great product variety**

Research has shown that offering more products to customers can lead to decision conflict, uncertainty in preference, and ultimately decision deferral (e.g., Dhar, 1996, 1997; Greenleaf and Lehmann, 1995; Tversky and Shafir, 1992). Berger et al.'s (2007) research shows that an unfocused product variety may have a negative effect on perceived brand quality or expertise. He says that it is important that the composition of a brand's product line sends a consistent message.

### **02.01.02 Positive effects of a great product variety**

Fortunately, in contrast to that, offering a greater variety of products can increase perceived quality and enhance purchase likelihood (Berger et al., 2007). In his paper

on the influence of product variety on brand perception and choice, Berger et al. (2007) state that; "compared to brands which offer fewer products, (a) brands which offer increased compatible variety are perceived as having higher quality; (b) this effect is mediated by product variety's impact on perceived expertise; (c) the higher perceived quality produces a greater choice share of the higher variety brand, even among customers that select options that multiple brands offer and (d) product variety also impacts post-experience perceptions of taste". Higher product variety can, thus, lead to more initial purchases, due to higher perceived quality and expertise. It can even lead to higher repeat purchase likelihood (Berger et al., 2007), because customers might actually experience a better performance, due to internal believes.

### **02.01.03 Conclusion**

To conclude, offering a wide variety of products has a positive effect, as long as the overall message they embody is consistent. It is therefore important to focus on this message in this design challenge. It already became clear in CH. 01.02 that the 'brand' is leading this message. The next chapter goes into detail on what this message consists of and how it can be approached.

## CH. 02.02 BRAND PERCEPTION

CH. 01.02 explains why the brand is the ultimate consistency determiner. To influence a brand's perception, or the brand image in other words, one should first deeply understand how it is currently perceived (Jankowski, 2015). Or as Jankowski (2015) puts it more boldly: "To change a brand perception, you must first know what it is. Not what you think it is, because your opinion doesn't really matter". Thus, it is important to get an understanding of how customers perceive the brand Brunotti and its products. According to Low & Lamb (2000) researchers have not yet accomplished to develop a brand perception measurement model, that is applicable to all types of brands. Though, many studies in this field have been conducted, some of which are applicable to this particular study. A brief literature review of these studies is drafted in this chapter.

### 02.02.01 Brand reputation

First of all, we need to know how well the brand is generally perceived; brand reputation. The brand reputation is an important aspect of the message that a brand conveys. Also, the reputation of the brand impacts the rate at which a brand extension is accepted. If customers perceive the brand as positive, satisfactory and of high quality, they are more likely to accept brand extensions (Hem et al., 2003). This is important information for estimating the speed at which the innovation proposals will be accepted.

### 02.02.02 Brand personality

Another way of approaching the message, that a brand conveys, is looking at the personality it embodies. Recent research indicates that peoples' relationships with brands are similar to their relationships with people. Therefore, customers perceive brands similar to how they perceive other people (Kervyn et al., 2012). This is important, because people do not only care about, and base purchase decisions on, a brand's product characteristics, but also the relational aspect of their brand perception (e.g. Aaker, Fournier, & Brasel, 2004; Fournier, 2009). A commonly used way of personifying a brand is Aaker's (1997) brand personality scale (see Figure 04). As Figure 04 shows, he distinguishes 15 facets, combined into 5 factors; sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication and ruggedness. Though the completeness of the scale is questioned in some studies, Kervyn et al. (2012) say the scale is well employable for assessing a brand's perceived personality.

### 02.02.03 Product reputation

Similar to the brand reputation in general, the perception of Brunotti's products play an important role in the message that the brand conveys. In other words; How good, likeable, and attractive do the customers think Brunotti's products are? Obviously, Brunotti wants to score high on these aspects. Note that a company's products are part of the 'brand' (Abbing, 2010) and therefore part of the brand perception.



Figure 04. 5 Dimensions of Brand Personality (Aaker, 1997)

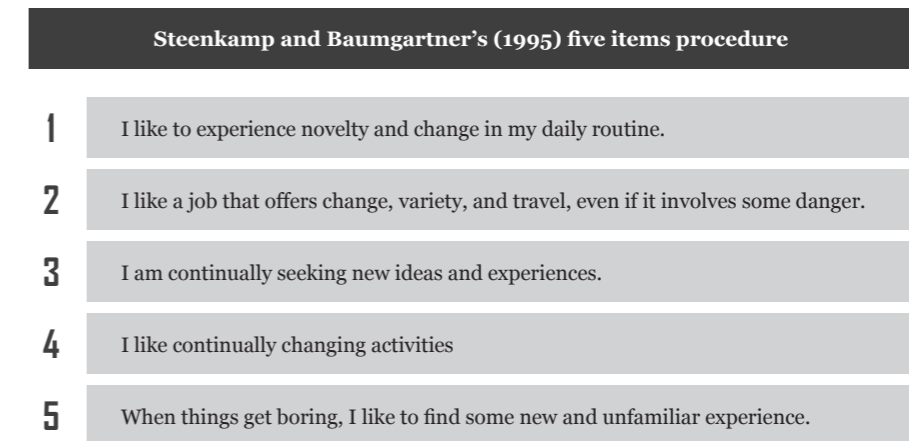


Figure 05. The five items of Steenkamp and Baumgartner's (1995) five items procedure to measure customer innovativeness

### 02.02.04 Core message

A company's core values and philosophy are at the very core of the message it wants to convey and, therefore, of utmost importance in this challenge. As Keller (2000) explains, brand extensions are often unsuccessful when they move to far from a brand's core value, confirming the importance of consistency. Hence, it is valuable to assess how well Brunotti's product currently reflect the company's core message. Gaining these insights, will help to showcase what core values need to be better reflected for a more consistent message.

### 02.02.05 Customer innovativeness

The previous parts of this chapter focus on how customers perceive Brunotti and its products. But, it is also relevant to assess the perceivers' character, to better understand their buying behaviour. To be more precise, the innovativeness of the customers themselves affects the speed at which they accept innovation. Logically, innovative customers are quicker at accepting brand extensions (Keller, 2000). Figure 05 shows Steenkamp and Baumgartner's (1995) five items procedure that proved fit to capture the customers innovativeness.

## CH. 02.03 THE TERM 'INNOVATION'

Throughout this report, the terms 'innovative' and 'innovation' play an essential role, but they are broadly interpretable. The terms are used very often and in a very broad business context. As a result, the terms 'innovation' and 'innovative' are used in an ambiguous way (Garcia & Calantone, 2002). In order to use 'innovation' as a leading design term, it needs to be further defined in context of this particular design challenge. Therefore, a literature review on the term is drafted in this chapter. Note that this chapter assumes a focus on product features. The reasoning behind this is substantiated in 04.04.04.

### 02.03.01 Invention or Innovation

First, it is important to point out that an invention only becomes an innovation if it is diffused into the market place. Thus, inventions can lead to, but are not the same as innovations. It first needs economic contribution. (Smith et al., 1996)

The solutions in this design case are sought in the field of competitive product features, that can be put to the market. Therefore, it does concern innovations, but inventions are exploit to actually generate the ideas for innovation; think of the smart materials in the technology analysis (CH. 05.01).

### 02.03.02 Technological innovation

To be more precise, since we are seeking technological advantages over competitors (see core values - CH. 03.03), this case concerns 'technological innovation'. Kumar & Phrommathed (2006) describe technological innovation as followed: "Innovation is an iterative process initiated by the perception of a new market and/or new service for a technology-based invention, which leads to development, production, and marketing tasks striving for the commercial success of the invention".

### 02.03.03 Innovativeness

Now, let's take a closer look at the term 'innovativeness'. Whereas 'innovation' focusses around the process of innovation, 'innovativeness' is mostly used for measuring the degree of newness of an innovation (Garcia & Calantone, 2002). Despite this seemingly agreement for the definition, big differences occur regarding from whose perspective it is viewed and what 'new' means (Garcia & Calantone, 2002). Since the aim of this project is to offer competitive advantage, 'new' in this case simply means that similar products from Brunotti's competitors (Appendix 04) do not yet offer the feature. Therefore, 'new' in this case means; new to the market. The market it comprises, in turn, depends on the product that the feature(s) is/are intended for.

### 02.03.04 Incremental innovation

Finally, it is safe to say that the innovations, sought for this design challenge, are incremental. This is best substantiated by Garcia & Calantone's (2002) statement: "Incremental innovations can easily be defined as products that provide new features, benefits, or improvements to the existing technology in the existing market." Aiming for innovative new product features (incremental innovations) to increase competitive advantage is supported by Johnes & Snelson's (1988) statement: "Incremental innovations are important as a competitive weapon in a technologically mature market", which Brunotti is definitely operating in.

### 02.03.05 Conclusion

To conclude, the term innovative in this specific design challenge embodies:

- 1 **Technical** (inventive) ...
- 2 ... **product features** (incremental innovation) ...
- 3 ... **that are new to the market** (innovative), and ...
- 4 ... **contribute to commercial success** from a ...
- 5 ... **product- and marketing perspective.**

**03**

**BRAND ANALYSIS**



**BRUNOTTI**



## CH. 03.01 BRUNOTTI'S HERITAGE

The first step in understanding the brand Brunotti is looking at its heritage, since its current identity can be traced back all the way to its origin. The brand Brunotti was not founded with a big investment budget or long-term strategy in mind at all. Actually, the opposite is true, as will become clear in this chapter.

### 03.01.01 Founding Story

Founded by the Italian Claudio Brunotti almost 40 years ago, the brand originates from a passion for windsurfing. Like many others at that time, Claudio was a windsurf fanatic. In 1979, he moved from Italy to the coast of Scheveningen in response to his need for fierce wind and waves; the perfect windsurf conditions.

Shortly after he moved there, Claudio started selling custom windsurf boards in Scheveningen under the brand name of Brunotti Boards (Figure 06, Figure 07, Figure 08). The brand had soon established a good reputation, causing its promotional T-shirts to become a demanded collectors items. Brunotti boards and shirts were both known for their colourful and surfy design, and their high quality.

As the boardsports scene changed, Claudio shifted focus from water board sports to the development of functional and technical snowboard-wear (see Figure 09). He based

the outfits on his own and other riders' experiences and needs. The gaining popularity of the sport and Brunotti's collection made the brand steadily grow.

Claudio passed all he knew about board shaping on to Jinne Sietsma, before moving back to Italy in 1995. Despite Claudio's absence, the brand Brunotti succeed to adapt to new board sport trends, such as wakeboarding and kitesurfing (Figure 10, Figure 11).

### 03.01.02 The brand's signature

Claudio's love for board sports and sense for fashion design became the brand's signature (Brunotti, n.d.). In the last somewhat 40 years, the brand Brunotti has gone through several administrative and strategic changes (see Appendix 02 on page 128 for a timeline). Despite the significant scale of these changes in for example; ownership, key employment, corporate identity, philosophy, collaborations and product positioning, Brunotti has always stayed close to its core; board sport lifestyle.



Figure 06. Claudio Brunotti shaping a board (Brunotti, n.d.)



Figure 07. Brunotti founder Claudio Brunotti (Brunotti Pinterest, n.d.)



Figure 08. Claudio Brunotti @ boards fair (Brunotti Pinterest, n.d.)



Figure 09. Claudio Brunotti with the first Brunotti winter collection (Brunotti Pinterest, n.d.)



Figure 10. Brunotti 2003 Kitesurf ad (Brunotti Pinterest, n.d.)



Figure 11. Brunotti kiteboards photo (Brunotti Pinterest, n.d.)



## CH. 03.02 BRUNOTTI NOW

Today, Brunotti is a well-established international ‘all board sport lifestyle brand’, distributing in over 38 countries worldwide. As explained, Brunotti’s hardware and apparel collection were perfectly aligned; the apparel being promotion for the hardware. But as the company grew, the distance between Brunotti’s hardware and apparel collection grew as well. Figure 12 gives an overview of the many differences between the two collections. How the lack of consistency came about and why it is indeed a problem, as indicated by the company (PAG), is explained in this chapter.

Over time, Brunotti’s product offerings variety increased. As C. van de Meeberg (personal communication, 3 October 2017) mentioned, Brunotti started expanding their apparel product offerings during the financial crisis to gain market share. As a result, Brunotti currently develops 26 different types of apparel products in five different categories (tops, bottoms, swimwear, footwear, accessories). Furthermore, Brunotti develops 24 different types of hardware products in four different categories (boards, board accessories, bags, waterwear). See Figure 13 on page 35 for a full overview of Brunotti’s product portfolio.

CH. 02.01 explains how a great variety in product offerings can be both a threat and an opportunity. This goes for Brunotti as well. So, whether the great variety of Brunotti’s product offerings, is good thing, depends

on how focused it is and the consistency of the message it conveys.

The next chapters of this report go into detail on the different aspects of this message. All these aspects are part of the ‘brand’ Brunotti and, therefore, analysed from a brand perspective.

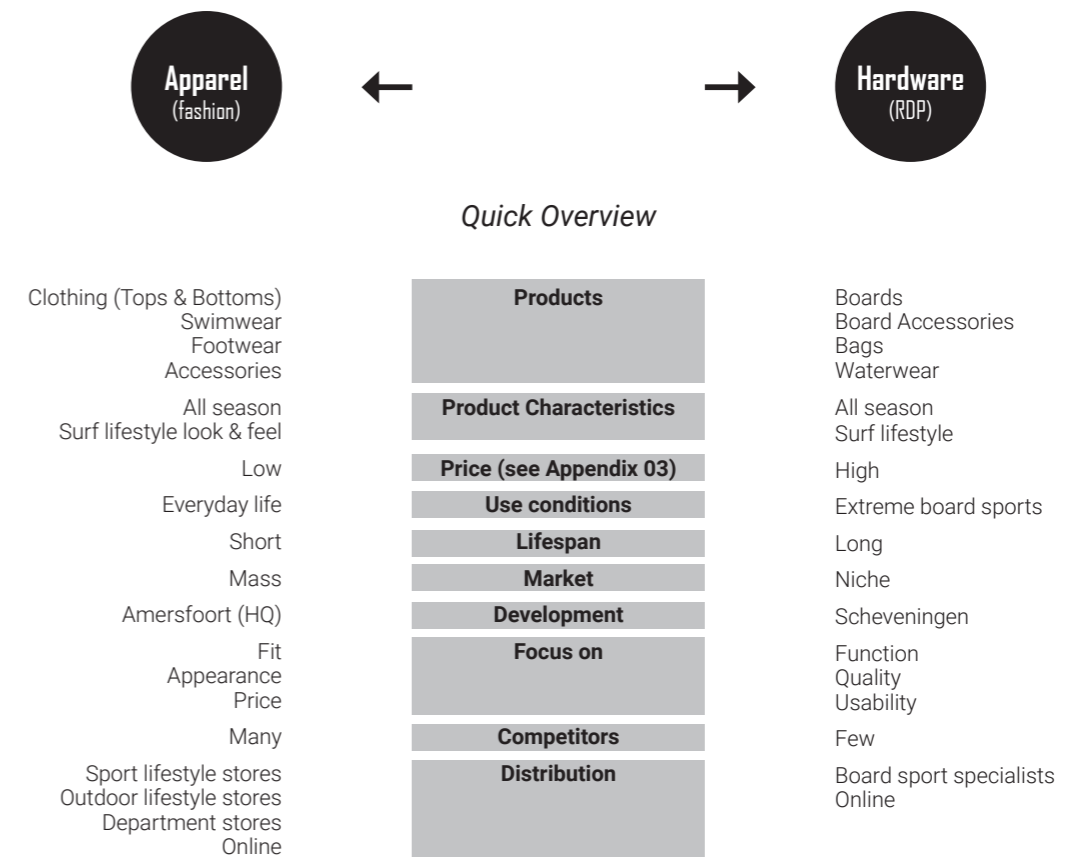


Figure 12. Overview of the many differences between Brunotti hardware and Brunotti apparel





## CH. 03.03 BRUNOTTI'S CORE MESSAGE

At the very core of the message a company sends, whether it is through products, advertisements or other forms of communication, are its core values and philosophy. This chapter goes into Brunotti's intended core message.

### 03.03.01 Core values

As Figure 14 shows, the first of Brunotti's three core values is Authentic. The underlying arguments for this core value all relate back to Brunotti's heritage (CH. 03.01 on page 30). The second core value is Active. As shown in Figure 15 and Figure 16, this value

embodies the brand's customers' lifestyle. This lifestyle is sportive and adventurous. Brunotti's products aim to support this lifestyle. The third and final core value is Innovative. According to this value, Brunotti's products are technical, embody a strong sense of research & development and set new standards. Brunotti's effort to be innovative does not only show in their core values, but also in their vision; "Brunotti always tends to be innovative in every division" (Brunotti, 2017), and in their current communication character ("Appendix 01 // Brunotti's Communication character").

Brunotti's Core Values		
<b>01. Authentic</b>	<b>02. Active</b>	<b>03. Innovative</b>
Scheveningen Colourful Heritage Claudio Brunotti Custom Boards	All Boardsports Lifestyle Riders Discover Pushing Boundaries All year round	Technical Research & Development Rider Developed Product Setting new standards

Figure 14. Brunotti's core values and underlying arguments (Brunotti, n.d.)



# THE CUSTOMER

SPORTIVE	FASHIONABLE	ADVENTUROUS
YOUNG & RELAXED MINDSET	FREEDOM	EMBRACE LIFE
CONSCIOUS & HEALTHY LIFESTYLE	AGE 18 - 49	ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

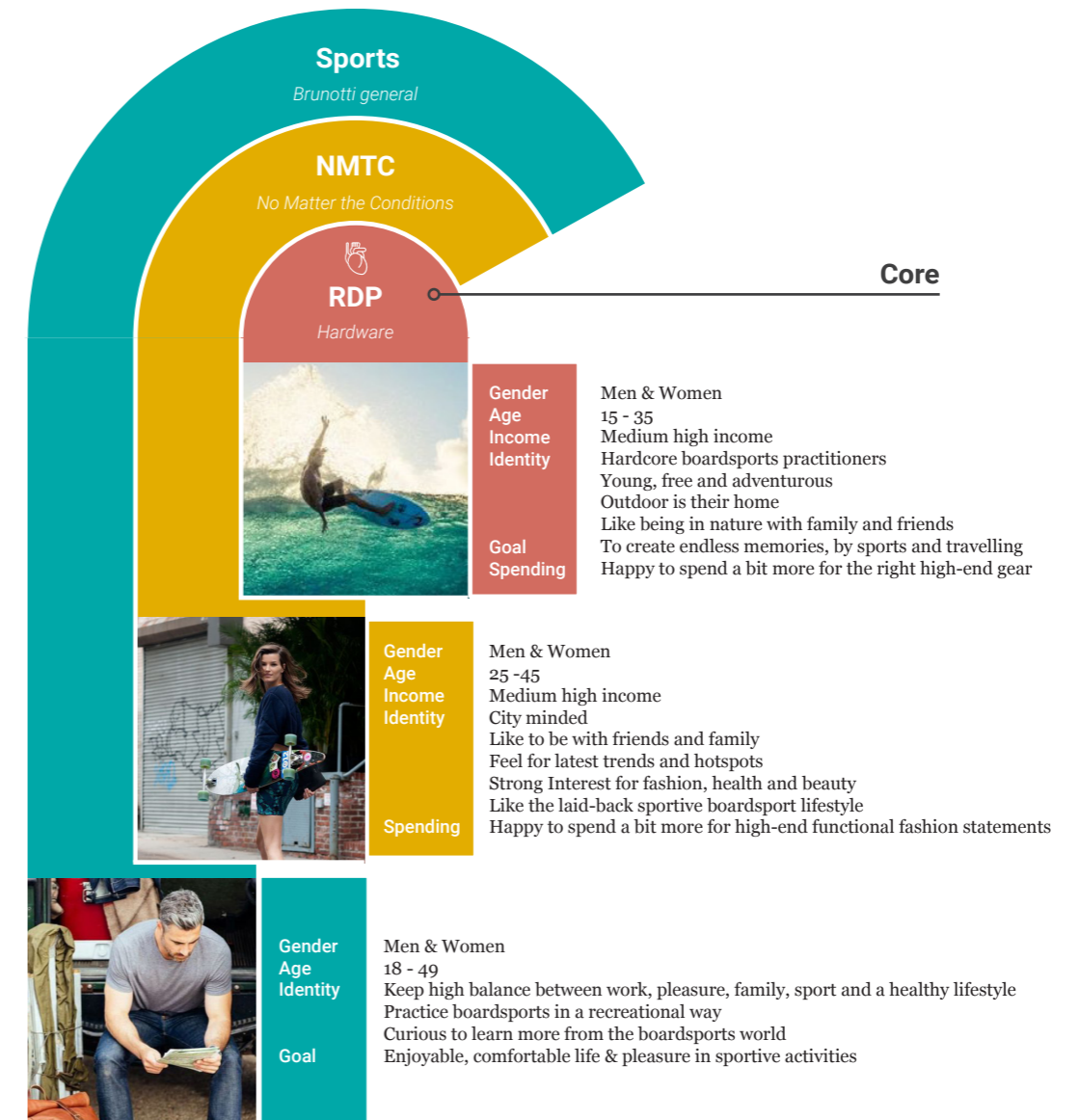


Figure 16. Brunotti's costumer groups distinguished (Brunotti, 2017)

# NO MATTER THE CONDITIONS



Figure 17. No Matter The Conditions was launched as a technical fashion collection in 2014 (Brunotti, n.d.)

## 03.03.02 Philosophy

Similar to a company's core values, its philosophy is at the very centre of the message that it wants to convey. This makes the philosophy and import factor in gaining consistency; for both the collections, all product categories, all product types, specific products or editions, the overarching philosophy stays the same. Brunotti used various philosophies for different product categories in the past. But fortunately, a single philosophy will be used in the future: **No Matter The Conditions** (J. Delfgaauw, personal communication, September 5, 2017).

Figure 18 shows a graphical communication example of this phrase "No Matter The Conditions", which is not new to Brunotti. It was actually launched as an addition to the brand in 2014. As Figure 17 shows, it then functioned as the name of a fashion collection, with a strong focus on functionality, inspired by Brunotti's boardsport heritage. Innovation was one of the key-pillars around which the collection was designed. The phrase implies that one should be brave and 'embrace the forces of the elements'.

In Brunotti's (2017) own words: "The forces and elements of nature shape our lifestyle. NMTC embraces the ever-changing weather conditions and unpredictable seasons – and the call for technical yet fashionable wear. This collection is pushing the boundaries of functional fashion, No Matter The Conditions. Wax, neoprene and sweat are the key materials in the NMTC collection. Details such as enlarged wetsuit zippers inspired by Brunotti's board sports collections and heritage give this collection the technical character from our core brand values."



Figure 18. Brunotti's philosophy- No Matter The Conditions (NMTC) (Brunotti, n.d.)



## CH. 03.04 POSITIONING

Besides the core values and philosophy, the positioning of a brand is an important aspect of the message that a brand wants to convey.

It is therefore important to mention that Brunotti underwent a large corporate change a few years ago. As Brunotti development director Cees van de Meeberg (personal communication, October 6, 2017) indicated, the financial crisis has had a noticeable impact on Brunotti's financial situation and market position. In an effort to strengthen Brunotti's position and ultimately increase sales, the owners decided that the brand should move towards a more high-end (A-brand) position. Brunotti has already put a lot of effort into this repositioning. But, as with all large-scale corporate changes, it is not achieved easily and many company- and change specific challenges occur in the process (Hayes, 2014).

The term A-brand is ill-defined and very open for interpretation, but in this case best defined as graphically represented in Figure 19: An A-brand is well-known and positioned in the high-end (more expensive) part of the market (see Appendix 03 on page 130 for an overview of at what prices Brunotti's products are currently positioned). Also, A-brand's typically sell, or at least claim to sell, high-quality products or services (Factor tachtig, 2008).

As Brunotti (2017) describes in its vision: "The brand's

vision is to become the key player in the market as an all boardsports lifestyle brand with hardware, soft goods, sportswear, functional fashion items and accessories for during windsurfing, kitesurfing, wakeboarding, surfing, longboarding, stand up paddling, wintersport and for the leisure besides the boardsports."

Consistency in the message they convey about this desired position is an important aspect of the brand's message, because it makes the brand's position easier to understand. And brands that are easier to understand better stick in peoples' minds, thus contribute to brand awareness (Abbing, 2010).



Figure 19. The three most important characteristics of an A-brand

## CH. 03.05 CONCLUSION

The last few chapters have gone into Brunotti's heritage and, more importantly, the message that Brunotti wants to convey. Brunotti's heritage tells the story of how the brand started from a single man's passion and grew into an international corporate. It had already become clear that conveying a consistent message is important for a brand with a great variety in products offerings, like Brunotti. Simultaneously, this great variety makes it challenging to do so. This chapter concludes on Brunotti's intended core message.

### 03.05.01 Brunotti's intended message concluded

As represented in Figure 20, Brunotti wants to convey their authenticity, and active lifestyle and an innovative character. In the future they want all their products to convey the philosophy 'No Matter the Condition'. And finally, Brunotti wants to be perceived as an A-brand, meaning they are well-known, high-end, and of high quality.

### 03.05.02 Focus on the execution of the message

It is important to mention that this assignment does not go into much detail on the quality and strategic value of the message that is described before. The brand's message is carefully designed by experts and will not

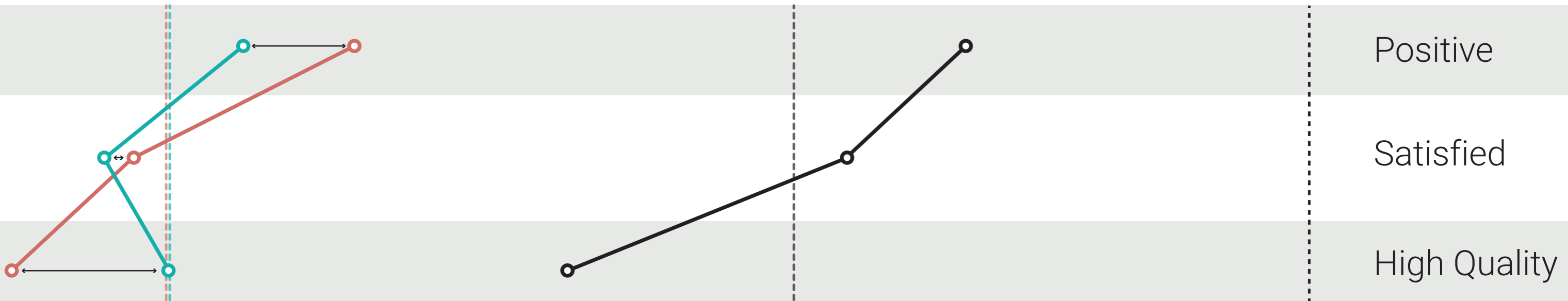
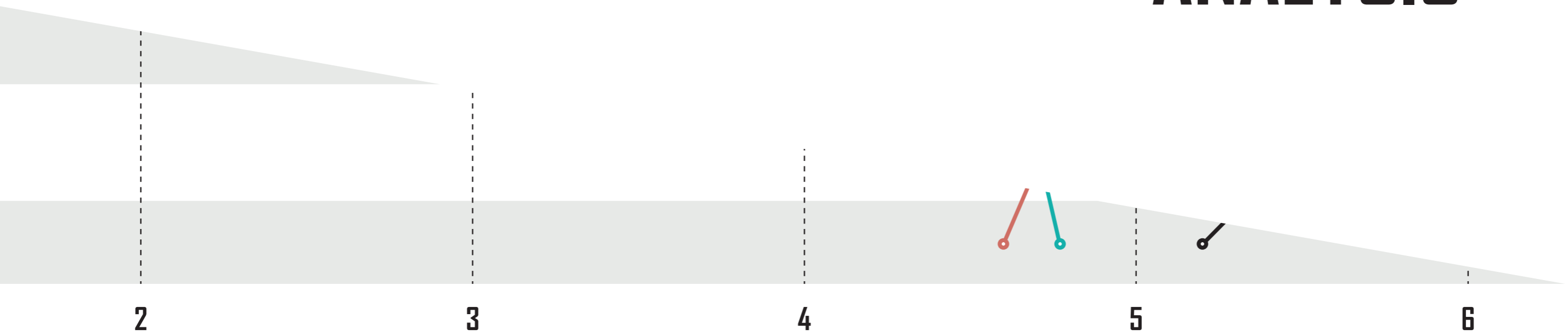
be questioned in this project. Moreover, a quick online comparison between Brunotti and the brands that are closest to Brunotti (Appendix 04 gives an overview of these competitors), points out that Brunotti's intended message is in fact unique.

Thus, the project focusses on the execution of the brand's message, rather than questioning its credibility. The aim is to contribute to this message's consistency by means of product innovation.



Figure 20. Overview of the different aspects of Brunotti's intended message

# 04 BRAND PERCEPTION ANALYSIS



## CH. 04.01 RESEARCH RATIONALE

The previous section (03), has gone into Brunotti's intended brand message and identity. Section 02 brought the importance of consistency in this message and identity to light. This section goes into the differences between this intention and the actual perception by the customer.

### 04.01.01 Expected gap in message

As illustrated in Figure 21, this design project is carried by the expectation that there is in fact a gap between Brunotti's intended and the actual brand perception. The many differences in Brunotti hardware and Brunotti apparel, as indicated in Figure 12 on page 33, suggest that the message, that Brunotti conveys, is not consistent. The only way to increase the consistency throughout Brunotti's entire product portfolio is by measuring the current lack of it (the gap), as perceived by the customer. Subsequently, the challenge for the product innovation proposals can be set.

### 04.01.02 Measuring brand perception

CH. 02.02 went into different ways of approaching a brand's perception. The brand's core values, philosophy and positioning (core message) are important parts of a brand's perception, but certainly not the only ones. CH. 02.02 speaks of brand- and product reputation and how Aaker's (1997) brand personality scale can be utilised in measuring a brand's personality. As represented in Figure 22, the brand- reputation, personality and core message, together, form the basis of this brand perception research.

### 04.01.03 Research question

This research aims to answer the following question:

How do (1) Brunotti's intended brand- core message, reputation, and personality differ from (2) the customer's perception of Brunotti's brand- core message, reputation, and personality?

Though some differences might be predictable, the research question is deliberately open, to allow for revealing unforeseen differences. Besides measuring Brunotti's customers' perception in general, differences between different customer segments are measured by answering the main question above for (see Figure 23):

1. Brunotti's Hardware and Apparel customers
2. Brunotti's Male and Female customers
3. Brunotti's Generation- X, Y, and Z customers

CH. 02.02 explained that more-innovative customers are quicker at accepting innovations. This information is interesting for determining a target group. Therefore, this research also aims to answer:

How innovative are Brunotti's different customer segments?

The measurements, as described above, are performed using an online questionnaire. The next chapter goes into detail on the setup of this questionnaire.

Figure 21. A gap between Brunotti's intended brand identity and the perceived identity is expected

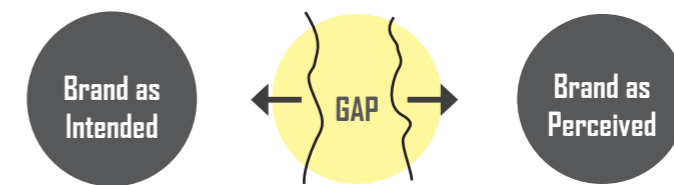


Figure 22. The brand perception research measures the perceived brand- message, reputation, and personality

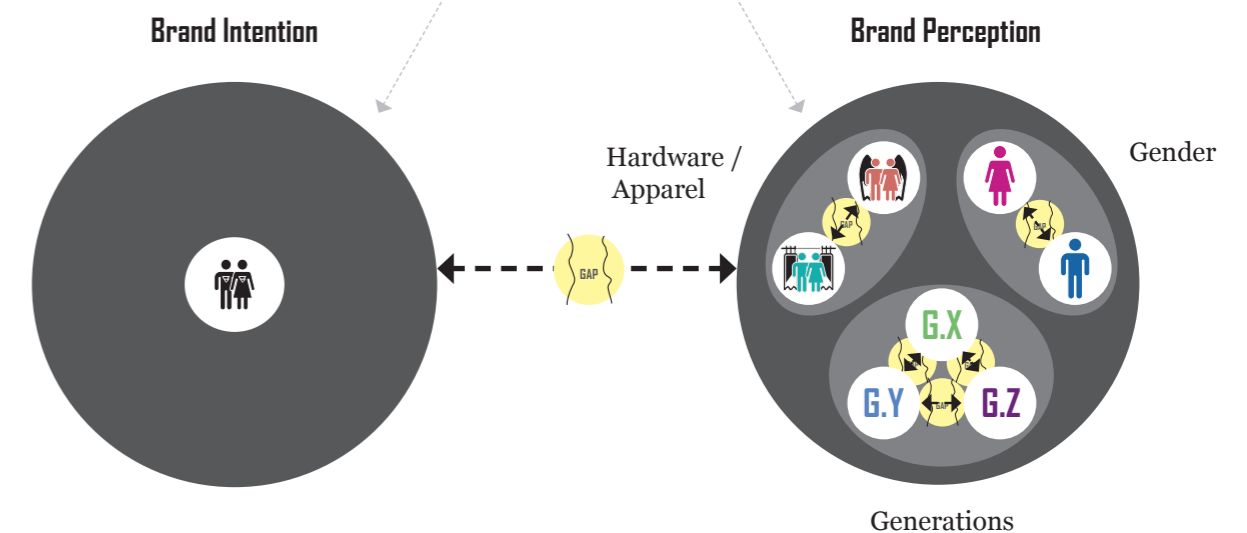
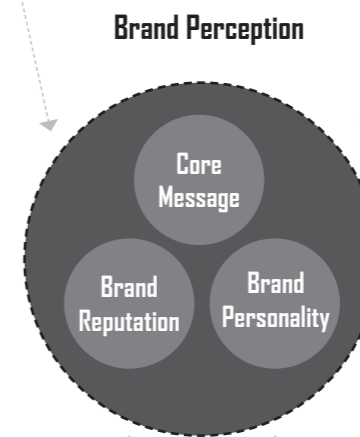


Figure 23. The research measures between intention and between different customer segments.



# CH. 04.02 RESEARCH SETUP

The quantitative brand perception research is distributed to Brunotti's (potential) customers in the form of an online questionnaire. Figure 24 visualises the structure of this online questionnaire. The survey is setup and distributed to allow segmentation based on customer groups (see "CH. 04.03 Participants"), gender, residency, age and buying behaviour. Hereafter, the setup of the online questionnaire is discussed in more detail.

## 04.02.01 Structure

Before moving to the first set of questions, the respondents enter the welcome page. Here, they are thanked for their participation and it emphasises that there are no right or wrong answers. Also, it says that to qualify for one of the prizes, they have to fill in the full questionnaire. They are then asked if they have heard of the brand Brunotti in a mandatory multiple-choice question. This not only ensures that the outcomes are solely based on the perception of people that in fact know the brand, but discloses name awareness (how well-known the brand is) as well.

### Section 1 - About the brand

The first section of the questionnaire focusses on the customers' general brand perception. Being the very

first section, they have only been influenced by seeing the brand's logo. This ensures answers that are solely based on their perception as it was before starting the questionnaire; without being influenced.

The survey starts with asking the respondents about their first thoughts of the brand; unprompted opinion. The question is open-ended, and non-mandatory to limit dropout. This applies to all open-ended questions. Then, the respondents are required to indicate their feelings towards the brand in terms of positivity, satisfactory and quality, on bipolar scales. As explained before, these variables can be used to measure reputation.

Finally, the respondents are asked which of Aaker's (1997) brand personalities (see Figure 04 on page 25) they associate with Brunotti in a multiple choice (multiple answers) question. To get an idea of how well Brunotti's core values are reflected by the brand in general (before presenting any stimuli) Brunotti's three core values (authentic, active and innovative) are added to this list of brand personalities.

### Section 2 & 3 - About Hardware and Apparel products

Now, the first segmentation, in terms of product familiarity, takes place. To do so, the respondents are

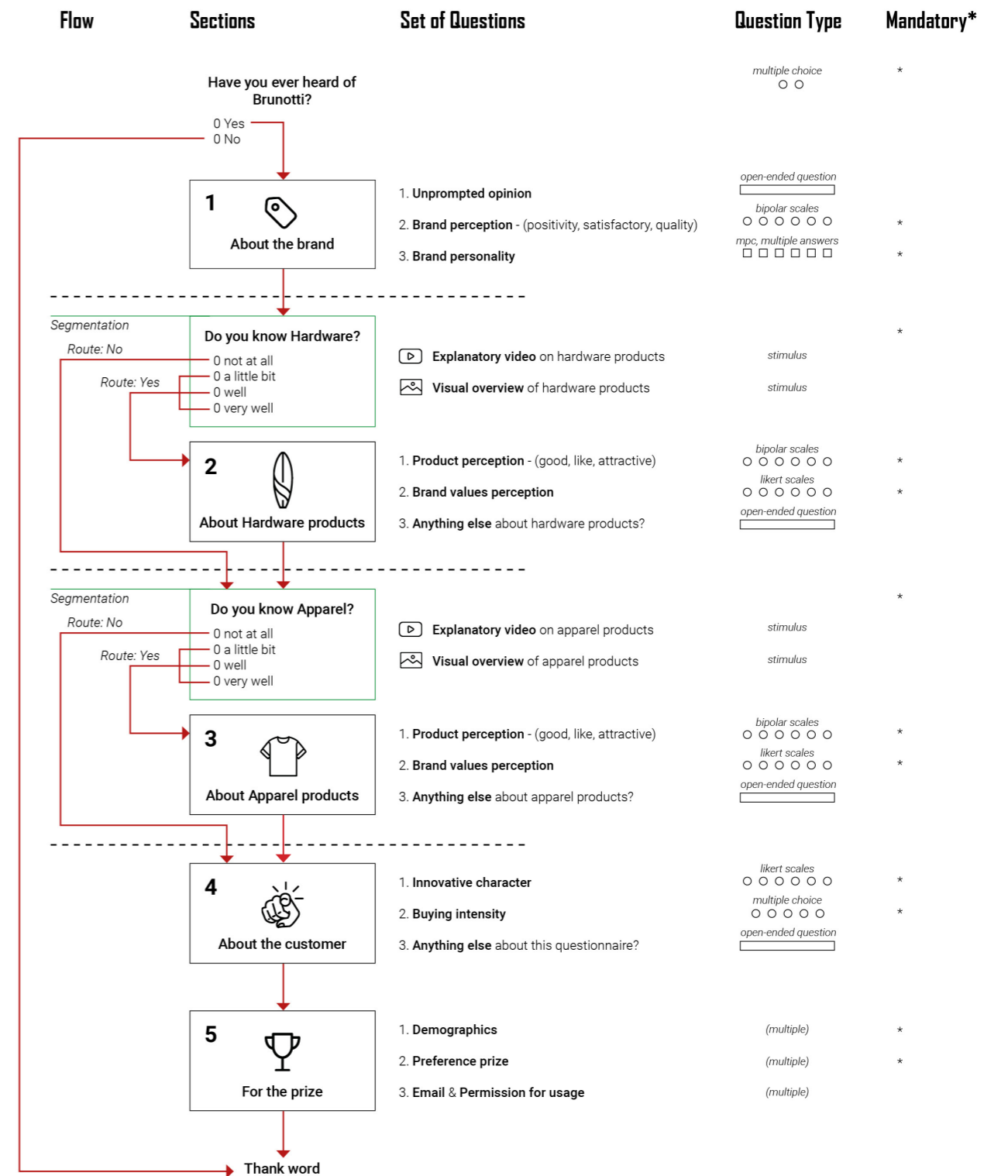


Figure 24. Online questionnaire structure

confronted with a quick overview of what Brunotti's hardware collection consists of, using a video (Figure 25) and image (Figure 26). They will now know what is meant with 'hardware' products. The respondent is then asked how familiar he or she is with these hardware products, using a single answer multiple choice question. If they do not know the products at all (don't know Brunotti makes these products), the questions about the hardware products are skipped. If they do know the products, they will have to indicate to what extent they are familiar with the products and move to the questions about the hardware products. The exact same segmentation happens for the apparel collection (see Figure 27 & Figure 28 for the Apparel stimuli).

So, in case the respondent is familiar with a collection to any extent, a set of three questions about that collection follows. This set of questions is the exact same for both the hardware and apparel products. First, the respondents are asked to indicate the reputation that product collection has in terms of; goodness (bad or good), likeability, and attractiveness, on bipolar scales. Secondly, a set of questions aims to examine how well Brunotti's brand values are reflected by that product collection, using multiple Likert scales. Finally, the respondents are free to say anything they want about the collection in an open-ended question.

#### Section 4 – About the customer

The fourth section focusses on the respondents. In the first set of questions their level of innovativeness is measured using five Likert scales, as presented in Steenkamp and Baumgartner's (1995) five items procedure. Then, they are asked how often they buy Brunotti products in a single answer multiple choice question. Finally, they are free to say anything that has not yet been discussed. This can not only lead to very interesting input, but gives the respondents a sense of appreciation as well.

#### Section 5 – For the prize

The fifth and final section is presented as a set of questions that need to be answered for awarding the prize. It simultaneously allows for demographical segmentation. The respondents can win a longboard or snow jacket by participating in the research. Their preference for one of the two prizes and information that is needed to contact them about the prize is put at the very end of the questionnaire for two reasons: it hopefully decreases drop out and leaves the respondents with a feeling of excitement.

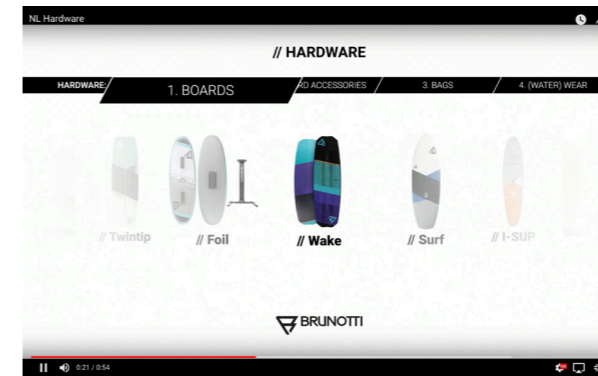


Figure 25. Hardware portfolio overview video

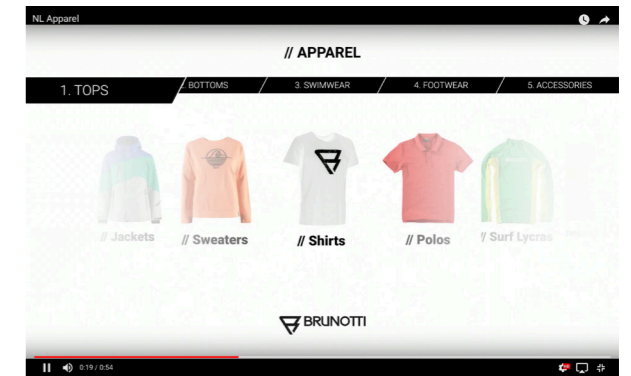


Figure 27. Apparel portfolio overview video



Figure 26. Hardware portfolio overview picture



Figure 28. Apparel portfolio overview picture

## CH. 04.03 PARTICIPANTS

Besides the demographical (age and gender) groups, three respondents groups are distinguished in this brand perception research; (1) Hardware, (2) Apparel, and (3) Customer respondents. Since this project aims to reveal inconsistencies between Brunotti's hardware and apparel collection, one group consists of (potential) hardware respondents and one group of (potential) apparel respondents. The underlying idea of this segmentation is that typical hardware customers have different perception of the brand than typical apparel customers. This helps in highlighting gaps and, thus to increase brand consistency. The third customer group consists of Brunotti employees. By asking Brunotti employees what they would have wanted the customers to fill in at each question, a picture of the intended perception can be painted.

### 04.03.01 Hardware respondent

Figure 29 helps to understand how the determination of the hardware respondents group took place. As the figure shows, Brunotti's (potential) hardware customers can be defined as 'hardcore boardsport practitioner'. Therefore, to reach this specific group of respondents, the online questionnaire was distributed on numerous online water boardsport forums. It is exactly this water boardsport practitioner that is active on these forums. The hardware respondent group demographics are shown in Appendix 05.

### 04.03.02 Apparel respondent

As Figure 16 on page 37 also shows, the (potential) apparel respondent (NMTC and Sports collection), could basically be anyone that is not a hardware respondent. This seems logical, because only boardsport practitioners would use Brunotti's hardware products, but everyone could potentially use Brunotti's apparel products. The apparel respondents are reached via Brunotti's newsletter and the students own social media channels. The apparel respondent group demographics are shown in Appendix 05.

### 04.03.03 Employee respondent

The employee respondents are Brunotti employees. They are simply reached via an internal mailing. In contrast to the questionnaire, that is presented to the two other respondent groups, the employees are confronted with a questionnaire in which they are constantly asked what they would have wanted the customer to fill in at each question, instead of giving own perception. This helps highlighting Brunotti's intended perception. The employee respondent group demographics are shown in Appendix 05.

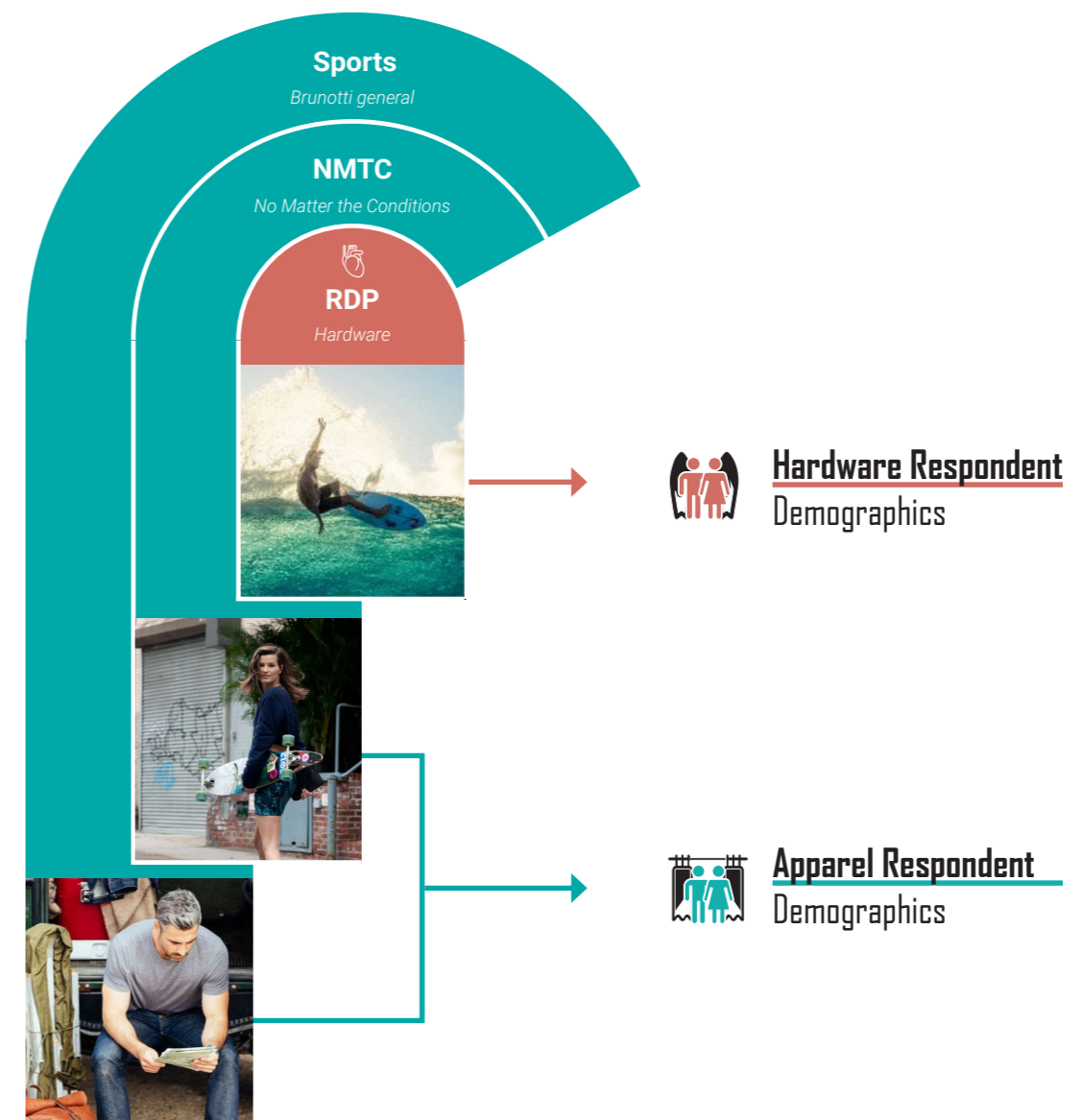


Figure 29. Research respondent groups compared to Brunotti's target groups (Brunotti, 2017)



# CH. 04.04 RESULTS & DISCUSSION

In this chapter, the brand perception research results, that are relevant for this design project, are discussed. See Appendix 05 for all research results. Besides bringing to light how Brunotti's intentions are similar to the customers' brand perception, the results clearly show some important points of improvement (gaps). The most important results are indicated with an exclamation mark in Appendix 05 on page 135. Note that the numbers and page numbers of the results in parentheses in this chapter correspond to specific results, as presented in Appendix 05. Since the solutions in this project are sought on a product-innovation level, the conclusions are translated into a design challenge. The colours of the sub-chapters that follow correspond to the design challenge components.

## 04.04.01 Name Awareness

Figure 30 shows the first results that stands out, namely; a stunning 98% of the Hardware respondents and 92% of the Apparel respondents have heard of the brand Brunotti (1 on page 137, 7 on page 139). It is therefore save to say the brand is in fact well-known in the Netherlands. For that reason, on their mission towards reaching an A-brand status, Brunotti's focus should not be on name awareness, but on the message that the name propagates. The next few result go into more detail on this message.



Figure 30. Name awareness among hardware and apparel respondents

## 04.04.02 High quality

The brand perception analysis shows that Brunotti is not performing poorly in terms of perceived quality, but does show room for improvement (17-19 on page 143; 46 on page 153). As Figure 31 shows, this applies to both the Hardware and Apparel respondent (17), males and females (18), and the different generations (19). The only notable difference in terms of perceived brand quality consist between the three generations X (37 – 52 years old), Y (23 – 37) and Z (5 – 22 years old), with the latter showing a higher perceived quality (19).

Despite the very small differences between the different respondents and relatively high reputation score (4,77 on a scale of 1-6), the room for improvement clearly shows throughout the analysis. The intended perception of quality for both the brand and products, as indicated by Brunotti's employees, is consistently higher than the quality as perceived (17-19 on page 143; 46 on page 153). The open brand association implies that only very few customers think of high quality when they hear the name Brunotti right away (54 on page 156; 58 on page 157).



Figure 31. Brand reputation among different segments

As Figure 32 shows, the brand personality analysis reveals that very little respondents associate Brunotti with competence (25 on page 145). Competence, indirectly, relates to a feeling of high quality. Figure 33 shows that this association with competence is lowest for Generation X and least low for Generation Z (35 on page 149), which is in line with the differences in perceived quality between the generations as mentioned before.

For Brunotti to succeed on their mission towards becoming an A-brand, I advise them to keep working on higher quality products. For the strategic product innovation plan it means that the innovations should only be brought to the market if they can be developed at high quality.

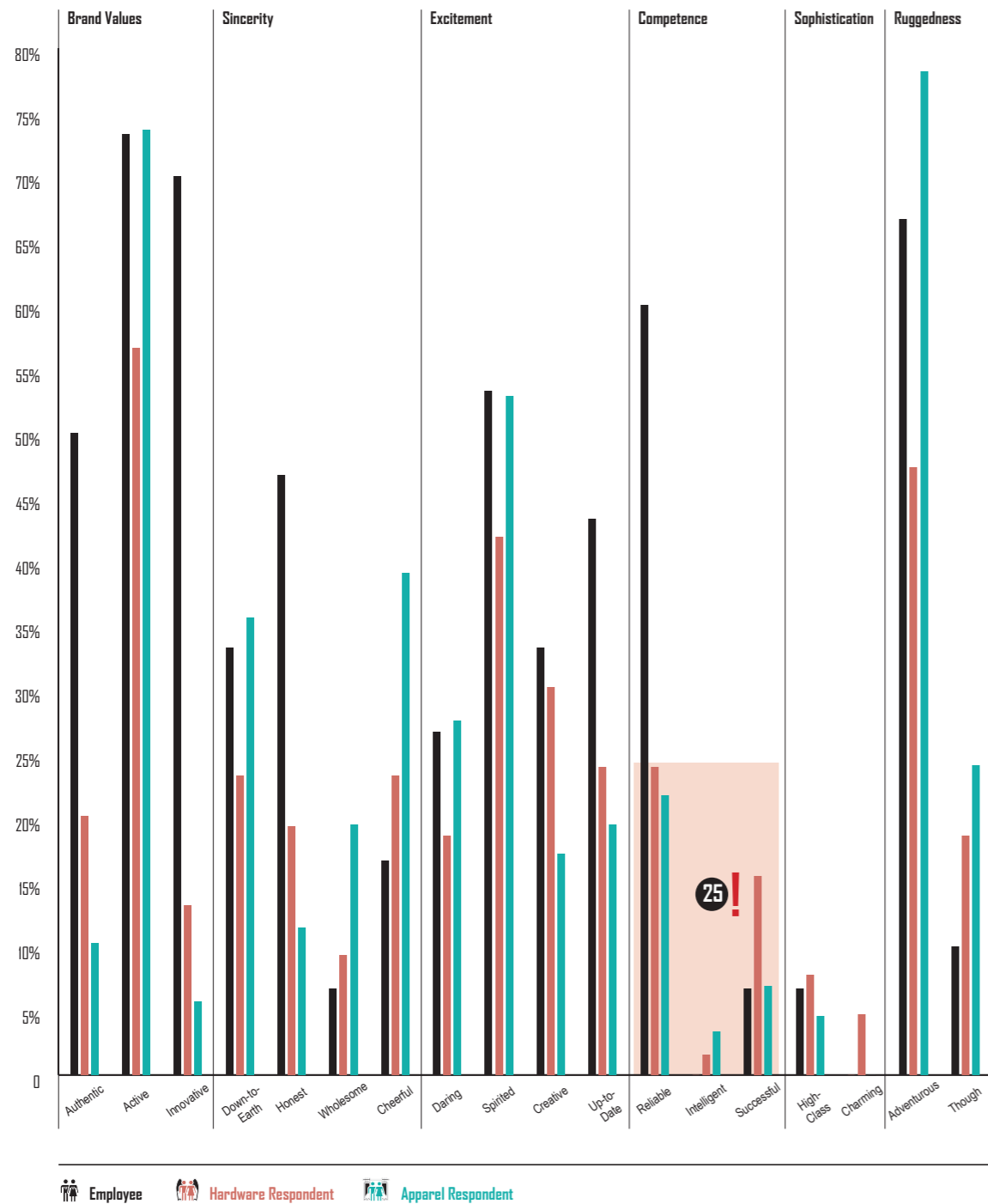


Figure 32. Percentages of employee-, hardware-, and apparel respondents that associated personalities with Brunotti

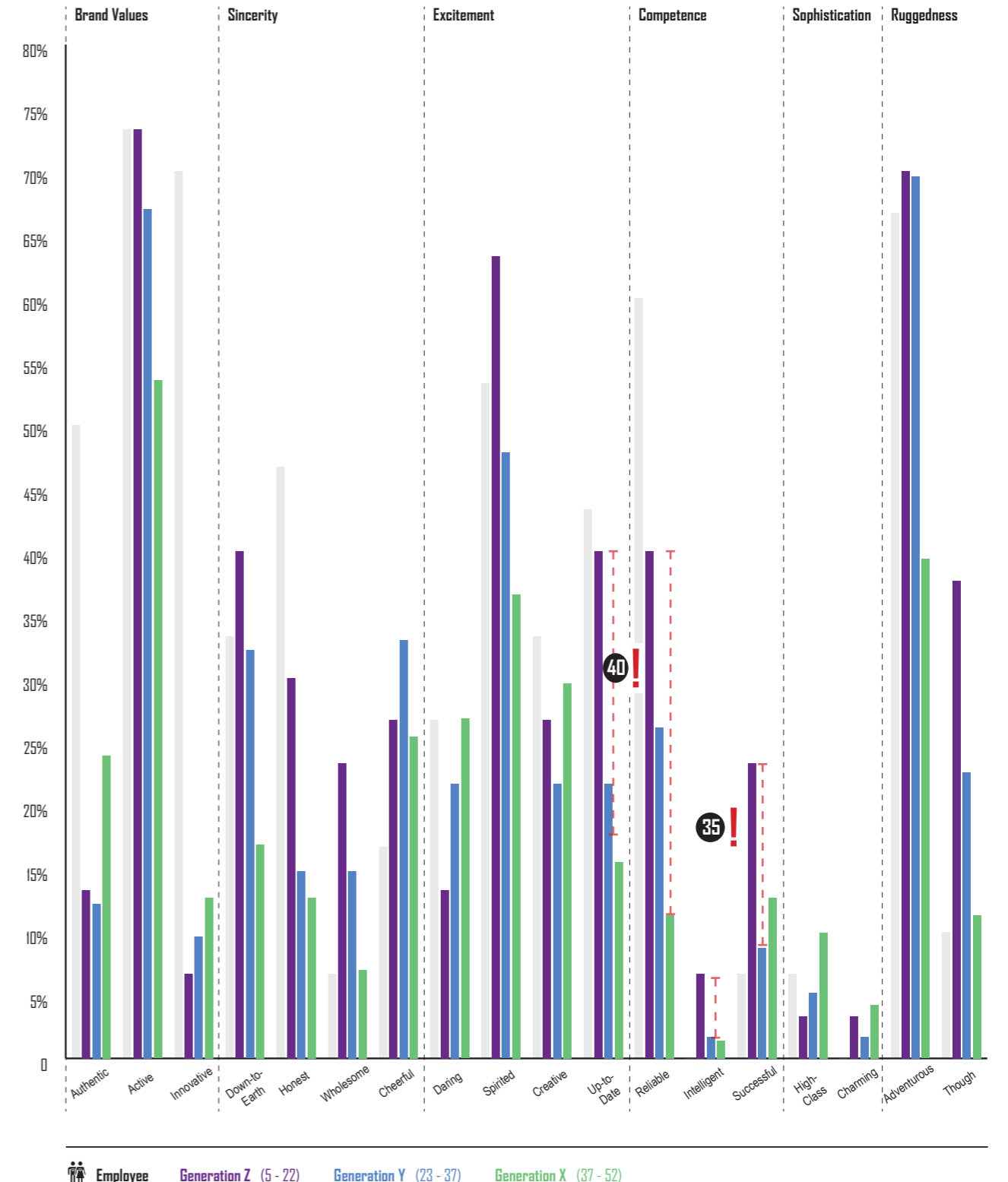
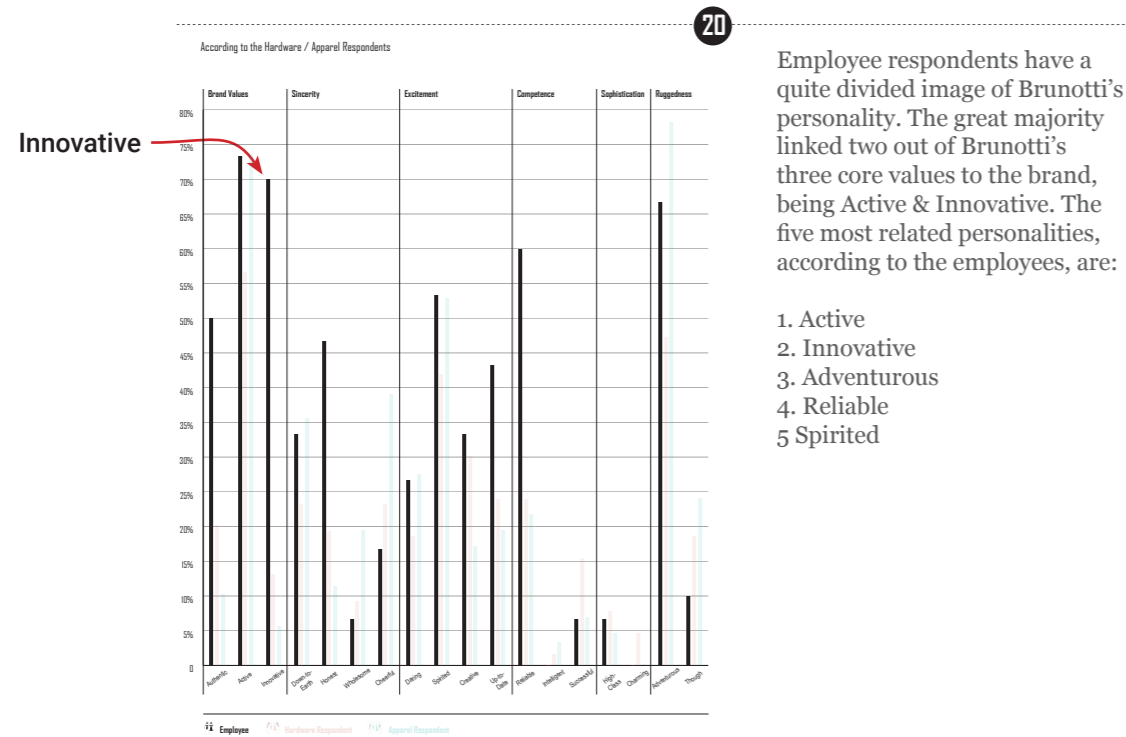


Figure 33. Percentages of employee-, generation Z-, generation Y-, and generation X respondents that associated personalities with Brunotti

Figure 34. Amount of employees respondent that associates the personalities with Brunotti



04.04.03 Innovative character

Throughout the analysis, multiple signs occur that there is a big mismatch in the perceived and the intended innovative character of Brunotti and its products. See CH. 02.03 on page 26 for an explanation of what the term innovative means in the context of this specific design challenge. As Brunotti's core values, vision, communication identity and multiple conversations with C. van de Meeberg and J. Delfgaauw and the employee respondents (20-21 on page 145) prove, Brunotti wants to be perceived as a highly innovative brand. Figure 38 shows that innovative is the second most associated character by Brunotti's employees.

In the contrary, customers consistently perceive Brunotti and its products as less innovative than desired. Figure 35 and Figure 36 show that, in terms of personality, customers barely associate Brunotti with 'innovative'

(28 & 34 on page 147) and very little with 'up-to-date'. A closer look at Figure 33 on page 55, shows that especially generation X and Y do not associate Brunotti with being up-to-date (40 on page 149, also see Figure 33 on page 55).

(flip the page for more on innovativeness >)

Figure 35. Amount of hardware respondent that associates the personalities with Brunotti

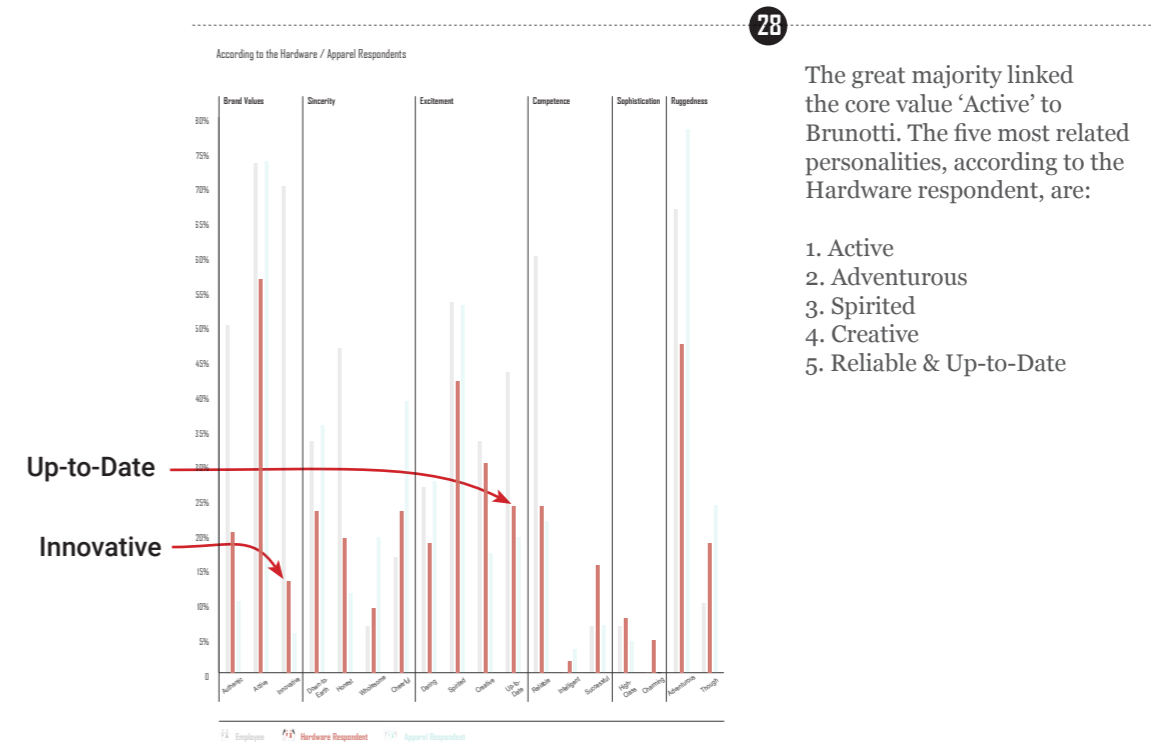
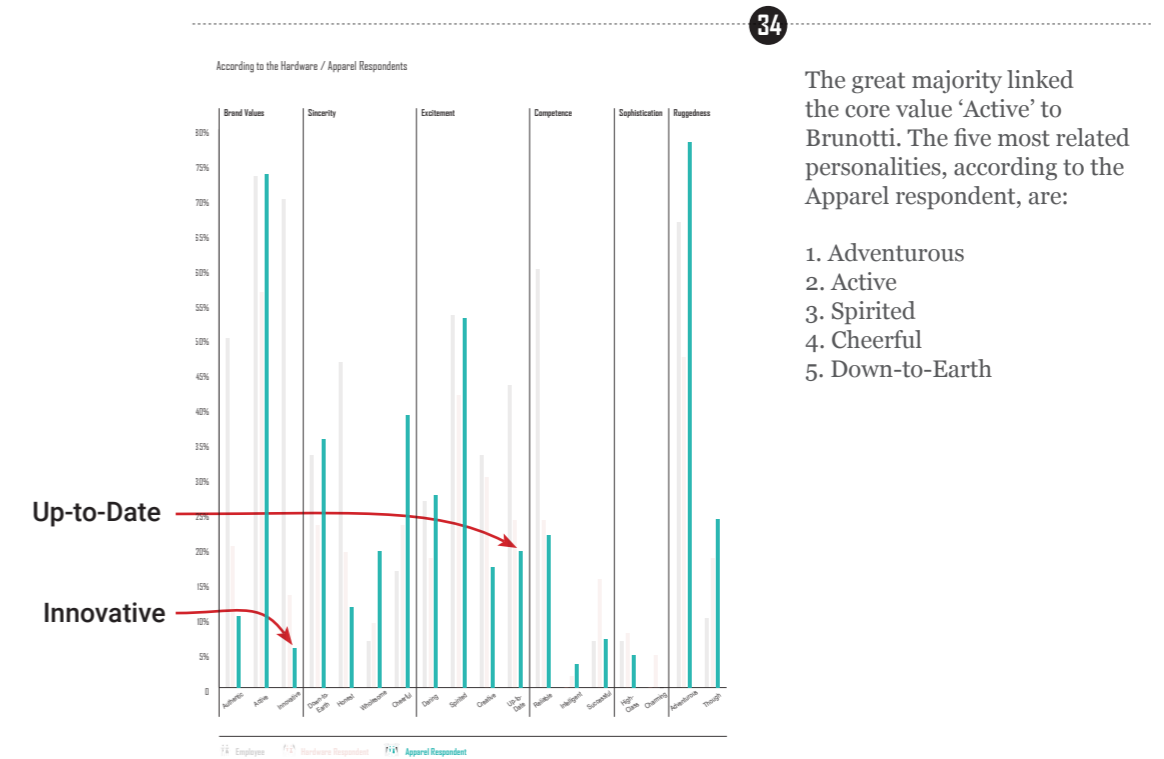


Figure 36. Amount of apparel respondent that associates the personalities with Brunotti



Also, Figure 38 and Figure 39 show that, in terms of product innovativeness, both the hardware and apparel products are perceived as much less innovative than intended (47-48 on page 153). Some employees mention the intention to be perceived as an innovative brand in the open brand association (60 on page 159), whereas no customer actually does (page 156; page 157).

Thus, innovativeness is clearly one of the biggest points of improvement (gaps) and therefore an important aspect of this design challenge.

### 04.04.04 Focusing on existing (core) products

Not directly derived from this brand perception analysis, but important to mention, is that the innovation proposals will consist of product features that are applicable to existing products, rather than proposing new types of products. To increase consistency, it is important to create focus in what Brunotti offers. As C. van de Meeberg (personal communication, 3 October 2017) mentioned, Brunotti started to expand their apparel product offerings during the financial crisis to gain market share. This, in my view, has only led to less consistency and strayed Brunotti further from its core. In an effort to move Brunotti's hardware and apparel collection closer together and closer to its core, the innovation proposals aim to improve products that are close to Brunotti's core, rather than expand its collection even further.

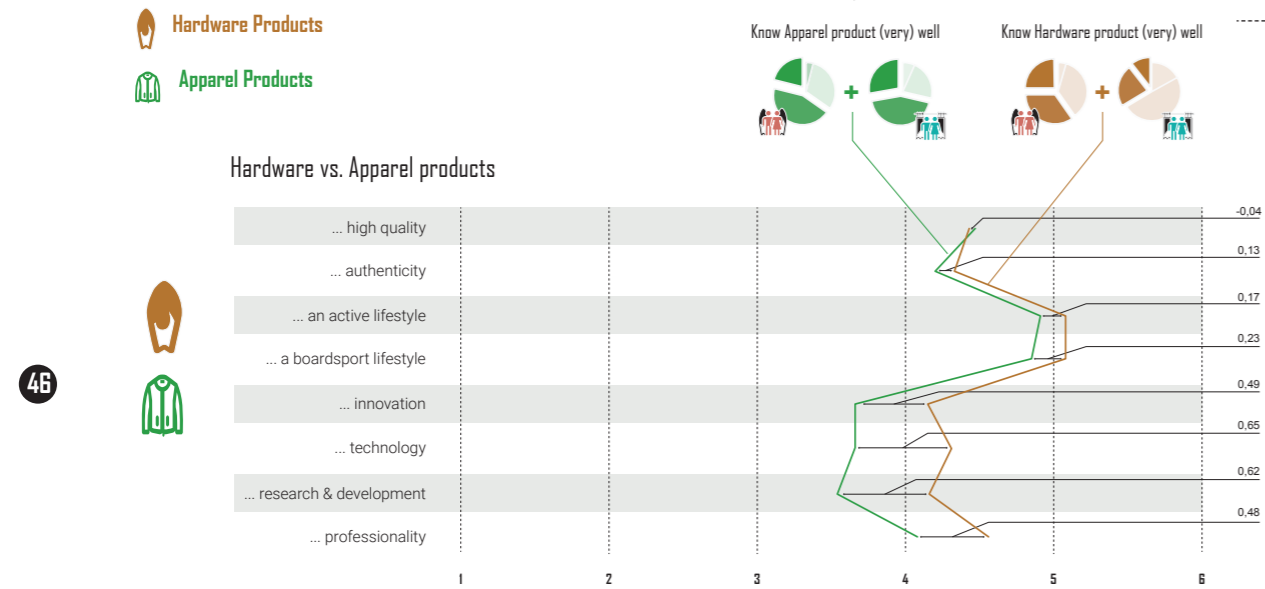


Figure 37. Reflection of how well Brunotti's hardware and apparel products embody Brunotti's intended identity, according to customers that know them (very) well

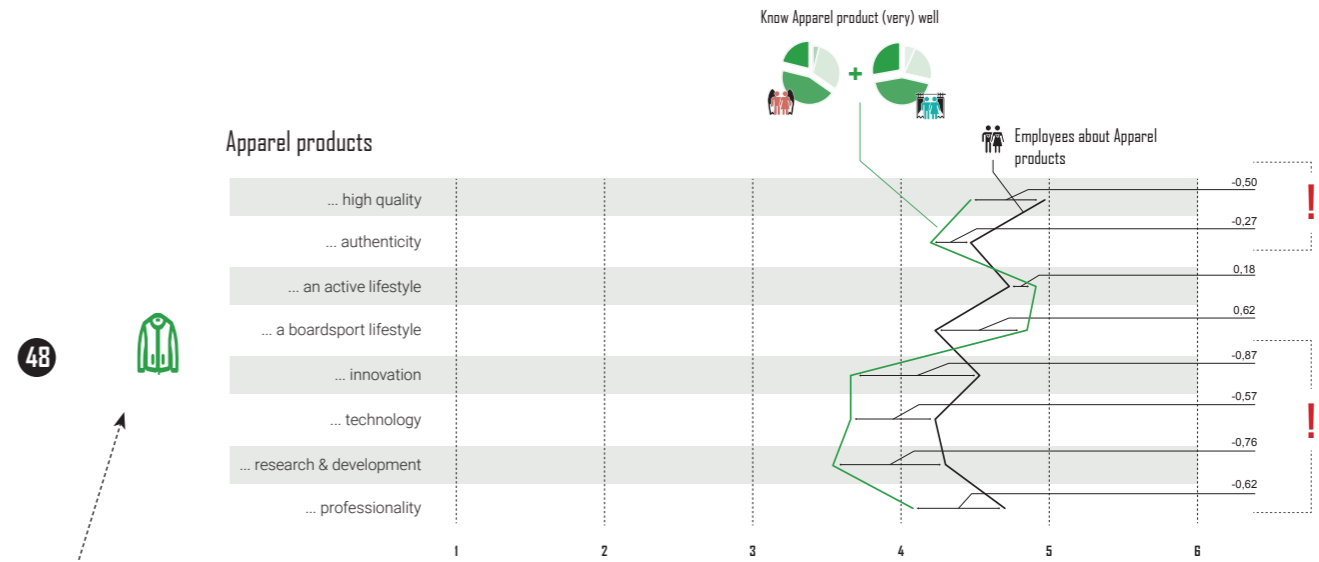


Figure 38. Reflection of how well Brunotti's apparel products embody Brunotti's intended identity, according to customers that know them (very) well and according to employees.

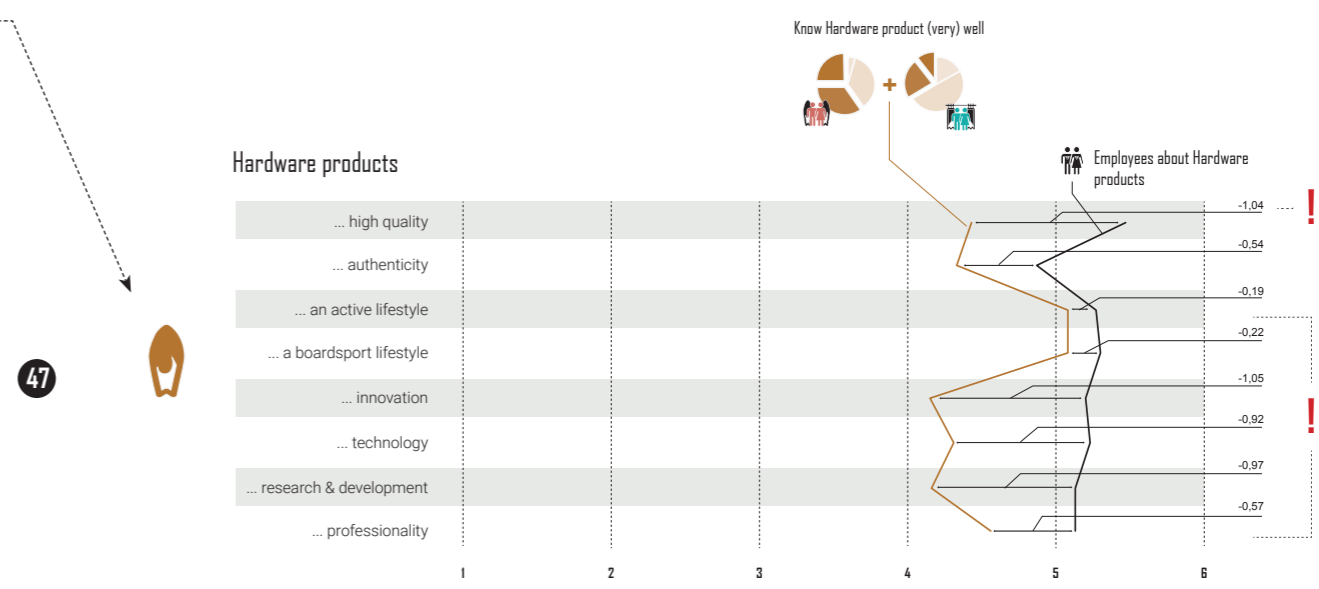


Figure 39. Reflection of how well Brunotti's hardware products embody Brunotti's intended identity, according to customers that know them (very) well and according to employees.

### 04.04.05 Create enjoyable memories

Looking at Brunotti's core brand values (see Figure 14 on page 36), an interesting conflict occurs. On the one hand Brunotti focusses very much on authenticity, and on the other hand on innovation. The focus on authenticity, directly derives from its heritage. Though, as is shown in Figure 40, customers relate authenticity to Brunotti to a low extent (22 on page 145). Especially the two younger generations of respondents (Y and Z), barely link Brunotti to authenticity (42 on page 149). A closer look at the open brand association responses reveals something very interesting, namely that only the older generation of the respondents (35+ years old) mentions aspects that are related to Brunotti's heritage (52 on page 156). This implies that the younger generations have little knowledge and affinity with Brunotti's founding story. I do agree that Brunotti's founding story is unique and very suitable for storytelling, but on the other hand, might not have a big effect on its current core-customer (the 15- to 35-year-old hardcore boardsports practitioner). They are simply too young to feel the same nostalgia from the 80's story.

Brunotti's heritage story can still serve a purpose, but in a more abstract manner. Just like the brand did when it was founded, it should offer great products that the users can create enjoyable memories with. Like a 46-year old hardware respondent said in the open association; "Claudio Brunotti and his wave boards, those were the days". Generation Y and Z should create the same memories with Brunotti's products today, that is the aim.

### 04.04.06 Support a boardsport lifestyle

The results of the brand perception research indicate low trust in Brunotti. Figure 40 shows that customers associate honesty (26 on page 145) and reliability (23 on page 145) with Brunotti to a much lower extent than desired. Especially generation X and Y show very little association with the two variables (39 & 41 on page 149). It is rather ironic that a brand that promises to be there, 'no matter the conditions', is not perceived as reliable. In an effort to rebuild trust between the customers and the Brunotti, not only will be focussed on quality as explained before, but product features will be proposed using the 'No Matter the Conditions' philosophy.

Brunotti is already using the philosophy in some of their products, but I propose employing it much more extensively; Brunotti should support customers in their boardsports / active lifestyle 'no matter the conditions'. Their products should, therefore, take away the associated inconveniences of this lifestyle using smart product innovations. For example; if it is cold Brunotti keeps you warm (e.g. in the snow), if it is warm Brunotti provides cooling (e.g. on the beach), if it is dark Brunotti lights your way, if it is wet Brunotti keeps you dry, and so forth. In summary, Brunotti supports your boardsport lifestyle, 'No Matter The Conditions'.

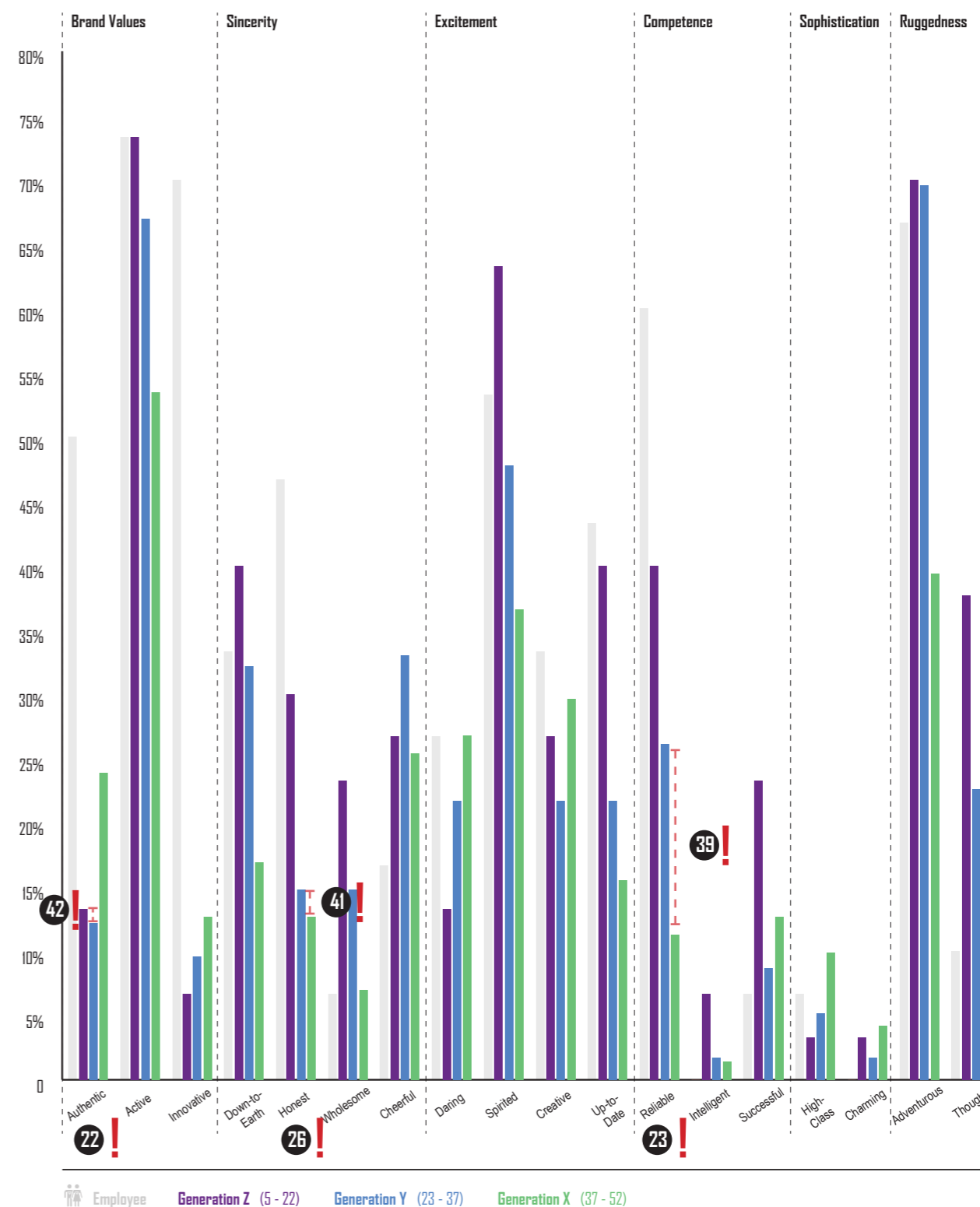


Figure 40. Percentages of employee-, generation Z-, generation Y-, and generation X respondents that associated brand values and personalities with Brunotti

# DESIGN CHALLENGE

Design **high quality** and **innovative product features** that are (1) **applicable to core- hardware and apparel products** and (2) **support a board sport lifestyle**, allowing the **core customer** to **create enjoyable memories**.

## Hardware vs. Apparel Respondent

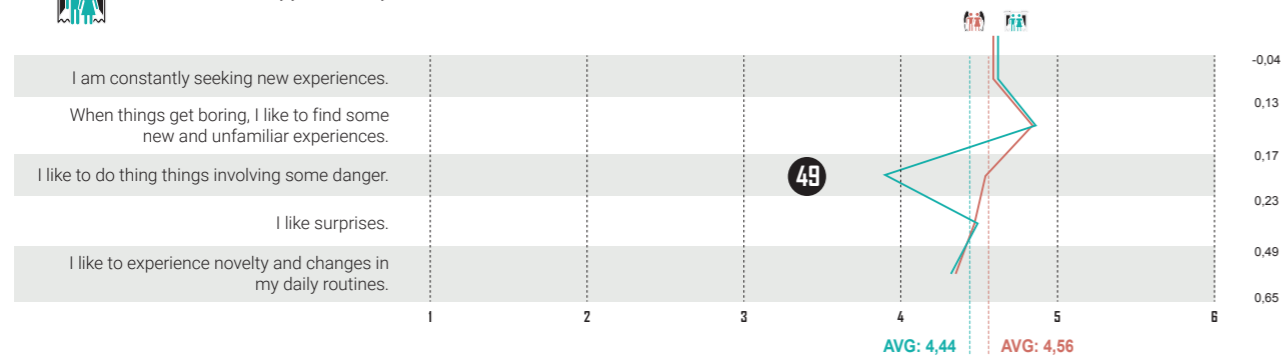


Figure 41. Innovative character of the hardware and apparel respondent captured, using Steenkamp and Baumgartner's (1995) five items procedure

## Generations

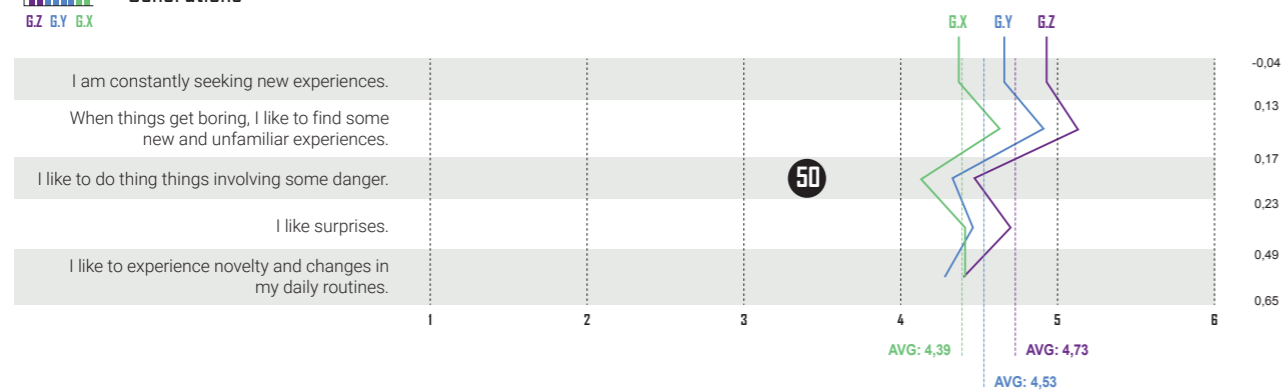


Figure 42. Innovative character of the different generations respondents captured, using Steenkamp and Baumgartner's (1995) five items procedure

### 04.04.07 Core customer

The product innovations will be aimed at Brunotti's core customer for several reasons. First of all, Brunotti's core customer; the hardcore boardsports practitioner, is 15 to 35 years old (Figure 16 on page 37). Figure 41 and Figure 42 show that the younger generations of hardware customers are the most innovative (49 & 50 on page 155) and thus quickest at accepting innovation. Secondly, these core customers are much more likely to gain from the innovations, given that they truly live a boardsports lifestyle.

Finally, the core customers serve as ambassadors for Brunotti's products. Thus, if the young hardcore boardsports practitioner thinks it cool and adapts the innovation, the others (mainstream) will follow. This way of putting the innovations to the market aligns with the thought of not putting Brunotti's heritage story central in future innovation, but focussing on cool innovations.

Figure 43. The Design Challenge that emerged from the brand perception analysis

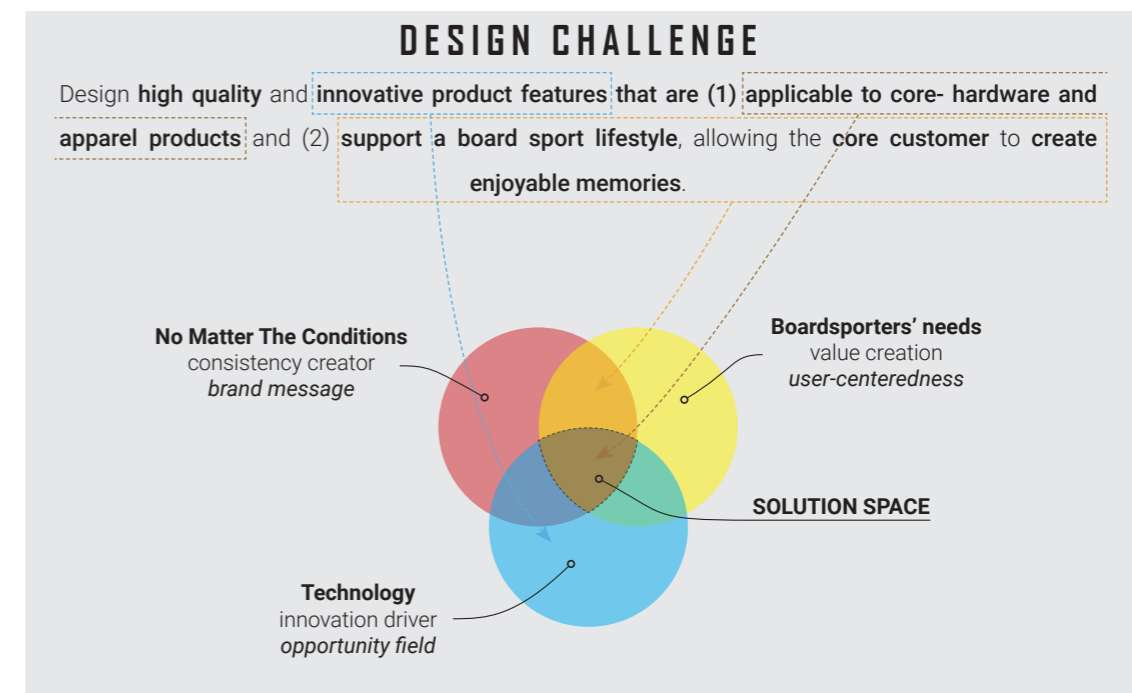


Figure 44. The solution space is where technology, boardsporters' needs and Brunotti's philosophy meet.

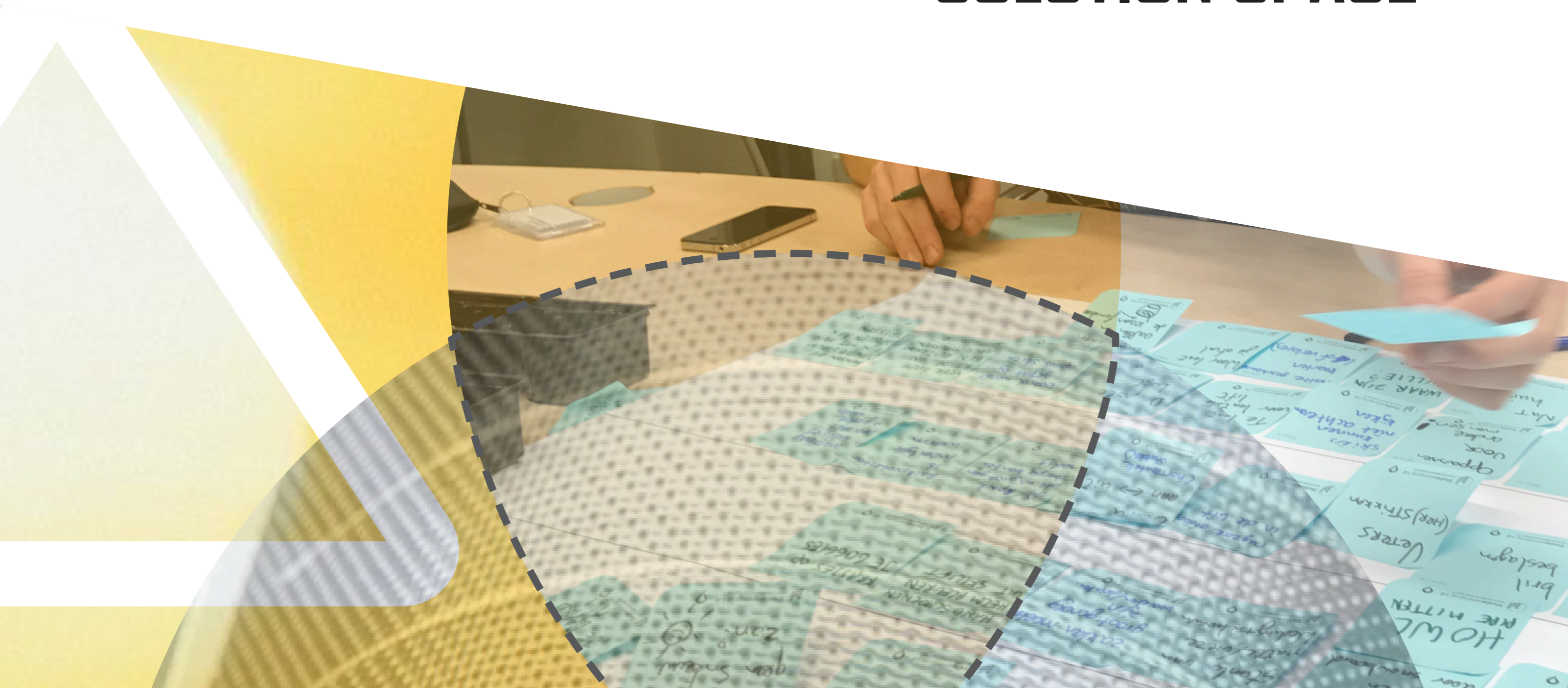
### 04.04.08 Solution space

Figure 43 shows how the different conclusions are translated into a design challenge. Before going into tackling it, some parts of the design challenge need to be further defined. This is already done for the term 'innovative' in CH. 02.03, but the conditions of a boardsport lifestyle need to be further defined as well to serve as input for the ideation (solution) phase. The solution space is graphically displayed in Figure 44. As shown in the figure, solutions to this design challenge occur where (1) technology, (2) the No Matter The Conditions philosophy, and (3) boardsporters' needs

meet. Through technology, truly innovative solutions can be created. The 'No Matter The Conditions' philosophy will be the consistency creator (theme) throughout Brunotti's product portfolio. And fulfilling boardsporters' needs (supporting their lifestyle) will make the innovation meaningful. The next section of this report (Solution Space) goes into the separate component of the solution space. It will show promising new technologies, focus on boardsporters' needs, and show how Brunotti's philosophy can be put to use for creating consistency.



# 05 SOLUTION SPACE





# CH. 05.01 TECHNOLOGY

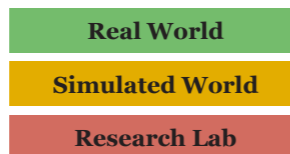


The previous part of this report highlighted that truly innovative features can be created with technology. Many of Brunotti's products are wearable; think of all their apparel products, and waterwear. This makes looking into the opportunities of smart materials particularly interesting. As Boxall (2016) explains; many fashion brands are already utilising highly technical fabrics, such as Gore-Tex and Spandex, for quite some time, but the future holds much more when it comes to smart materials. This chapter goes into these so-called smart materials.

## 05.01.01 Smart materials

Smart materials can offer exactly what is needed to tackle this project's design challenge, namely; lead to new-to-the-market (innovative) products that support boardporters in their lifestyle no matter the conditions. An overview of the smart materials, that served as input

TRL 9	actual system proven in operational environment
TRL 8	system complete and qualified
TRL 7	system prototype demonstration in operational environment
TRL 6	technology demonstrated in relevant environment
TRL 5	technology validated in relevant environment
TRL 4	technology validated in lab
TRL 3	experimental proof of concept
TRL 2	technology concept formulated
TRL 1	basic principles observed



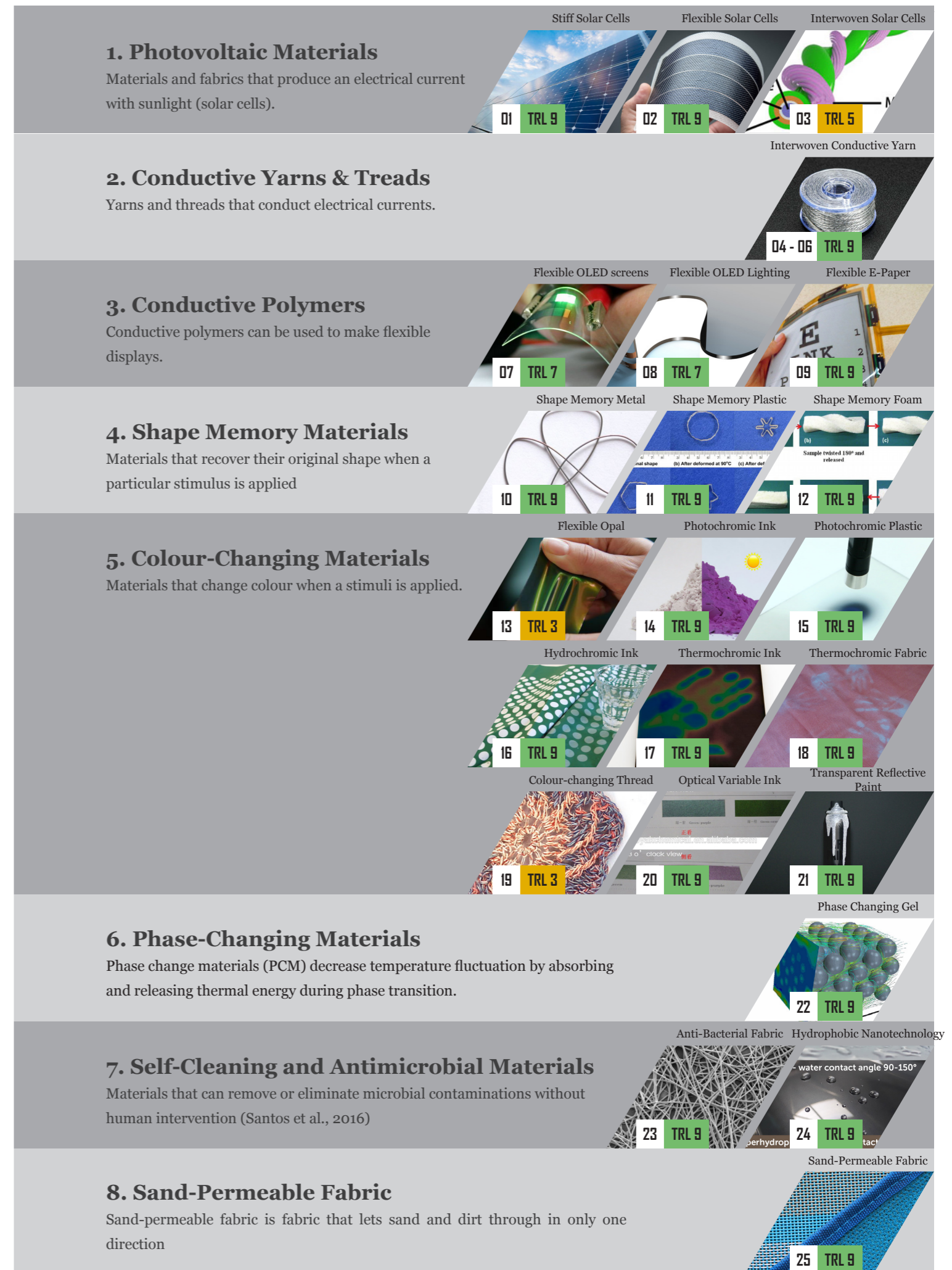
for the ideation phase of this project, is shown in Figure 46. See Appendix 06 on page 160 for the full (more extensive) smart material analysis.

## 05.01.02 Technology readiness

The smart material analysis covers a wide range, in terms of 'technology readiness'. This means that some of the technologies, that are vital to the smart material's function, are mature enough to be put to the market, whereas others are still in a much more experimental phase of development. To provide a common understanding of technology status, the European Commission determined nine technology readiness levels (TRLs) (European Commission, 2016). The TRLs indicate the maturity level of particular technologies, with TRL one being lowest and TRL nine the highest (Figure 45). Titlow (2015) describes it as level one being a "drawing on a board, or "wouldn't-it-be-cool-if"" brainstorm level and level nine being a "technology that is completed, stuffed into a pretty marketing-approved box and sitting on shelf waiting to be sold". The technology readiness levels are obviously relevant to the strategic planning. Therefore, an assessment of the TRL is performed for each technology, as indicated in the analysis (Appendix 06) and Figure 46.

Figure 45. The nine technology readiness levels (TRLs) (European Commission, 2016)

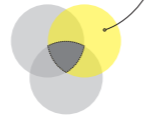
Figure 46. Overview of smart materials categories





## CH. 05.02 BOARDSPORTERS' NEEDS

Boardsporters' needs  
value creation  
user-centeredness



Supporting the core customers in their boardsport lifestyle, allowing them to create enjoyable memories, that is the aim. But what does this lifestyle look like, and what are the pains in these conditions that ask for innovative solutions? Getting answers to these questions, asks for a typical human-centred approach. Accordingly, an exploratory session with four boarders was setup (see Figure 47). Together, they represented surfing, kitesurfing, wakeboarding and snowboarding. When asked to take part in the session, they were all willing to help, but also indicated that they did not experience any 'pains' during a typical boarding-day. It became clear that the boarders take the 'pains' of their boardsport lifestyle for granted and that their needs are, thus, latent.

### 05.02.01 Unravel latent needs

During the session, the boarders were asked to sketch a scenario (day-in-the-life-of), from the moment they decide to go boarding, until being back home and ready to pursue with another activity. They were asked to make one scenario for water-boarding and one for snowboarding, in an attempt to cover Brunotti's full product range. The original plan was to then go through the scenarios together and unravel possible pains, using Brunotti's products as stimuli. But surprisingly, after spending only ten minutes on sketching the scenarios,

the pains started to arise and did not stop coming up until the very end of the session. As a result, the four participants indicated over 100 pains. Figure 48 shows examples of water- and winter boardsport lifestyle pains for which the ideas (Appendix 08) offer solutions. See Appendix 07 on page 171 for the full list of pains.

### 05.02.02 Room for meaningful innovation

The great amount of pains, that came to light during the session, shows that there is much to improve to a boardsport lifestyle. This offers great opportunities for meaningful innovation and, thus, for Brunotti to create value for their customers. The output of the session has been used as problems for integrated creative problem-solving sessions as intended by Buijs & Van der Meer (2013).



Figure 47. An exploratory session with boardsport practitioners to reveal their needs

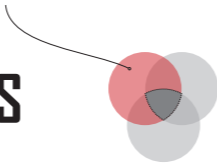
Boardsport Lifestyle Pains / Inconveniences	
<h3>Water Boardsports</h3>	<h3>Winter Boardsports</h3>
<p>“</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The sun is annoying for your eyes, especially in the late afternoon, but sunglasses easily get lost while surfing.</li> <li>• It is hard to travel with all your (kite) surf stuff by bike</li> <li>• It is hard to fit all your stuff in your car.</li> <li>• It is always hard to keep your socks clean, while changing.</li> <li>• It is hard to keep your valuable stuff save and dry on the beach.</li> <li>• Your car- trunk and seat often get wet on your way back home.</li> <li>• Boards easily break during transport (bumping into other stuff).</li> <li>• Sand is basically everywhere after going to the beach.</li> <li>• Wetsuits get dirty when taking it off.</li> <li>• It can be hard to take of your wetsuit after surfing, because your hands are numb.</li> <li>• It is hard to keep track of time, while in the water.</li> <li>• With cold weather, the black hoodies make it hard to recognise your friends in the water.</li> <li>• Stuff gets stolen while you are in the water.</li> </ul> <p>”</p>	<p>“</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You easily get sweaty because your hot, and then you'll get too cold.</li> <li>• Bags can be impractical while boarding.</li> <li>• You easily get condensation on you ski goggles, even with the anti-condensation ones.</li> <li>• It is hard to keep track of time with all your ski clothes on.</li> <li>• You easily lose sight of each other.</li> <li>• It can be hard to find each other back again.</li> <li>• Stuff gets stolen during après ski.</li> </ul> <p>”</p>

Figure 48. Examples of boardsport pains (for which the ideas offer a solutions)



## CH. 05.03 NO MATTER THE CONDITIONS

No Matter The Conditions  
consistency creator  
brand message



Part 03.03.02 explains how Brunotti is moving towards a singular philosophy and part 04.04.06 on page 60 says why this philosophy should be put central in creating a consistent message throughout Brunotti's product portfolio. Though, the four-word promise is not yet ready to put to such use. A deeper understanding of the philosophy and slightly different angle of incidence are needed. This chapter goes into this angle of incidence.

### 05.03.01 The message NMTC conveys

#### Ever-changing weather conditions & unpredictable seasons

On the one hand, 'No Matter The Conditions' calls to embrace rough weather conditions, with the statements 'embrace the ever-changing weather conditions' and 'embrace the unpredictable seasons' (CH. 03.03). Besides the specific inconveniences mentioned by the boardporters, boardporters in general will have to cope with rough weather conditions. To come up with innovations, that support users in these conditions, it is key to understand what conditions actually occur in real life. Figure 49 displays the range of possible conditions; from ice cold to scorching hot, from extremely dry to soaking wet, from pitch dark to blindingly bright, from heavily clouded to extremely sunny, from windless to hurricane scenes, and from clear to heavily foggy. Similar to the inconveniences from the boardporter analysis, the conditions as described above serve as input for ideation.

#### Embraces the forces of the elements

On the other hand, 'No Matter The Conditions' calls to 'embrace the forces of the elements'. For consistent innovation output, I suggest utilising this thought even further. The elements perfectly allow for classification of innovative features. Whereas it might be hard to apply the exact same innovative features to both sides

of Brunotti's product portfolio (hardware and apparel), it is much easier to do so with more abstract features (classes), being the elements. Appendix 08 shows how all different ideas can be classified, using the elements as presented in Figure 51. Figure 52 on page 72 shows how the 'embrace the elements' thought applies to the different boardsports for which Brunotti's sells products and Figure 53 on page 73 shows how even Brunotti's products can be classified, using the four elements. Thus the elements serve to create consistency on both a boardsports-, product-, and feature level. This strategic classification will hereafter be referred to as the 'Embrace the Element' strategy. How the elements apply to the feature level will be elaborately discussed in the next section of this report.

It is important to note that none of Brunotti's closest competitors (Appendix 04) uses a similar classification, and it therefore is unique. Note that, though not utilised by any close competitors, 'element' is in fact used by skateboard (lifestyle) brand Element. Fortunately, Element's (n.d.) website shows that they do not use the term for any classification purposes. Furthermore, Brunotti's development director C. van de Meeberg (personal communication, 16 January 2018), stated that the brand does not form an obstacle for the intended classification whatsoever.

### 05.03.02 Classification icons

As a recognisable marking throughout Brunotti's product portfolio, and thus consistent factor, the classes (elements) are identified using an ancient notation. As shown in Figure 50, the four basic elements were identified on a cold to warm and dry to wet matrix by Aristotle around 450 BC. Note how the icons from Aristotle's notation Figure 50 match the icons in Figure 51.

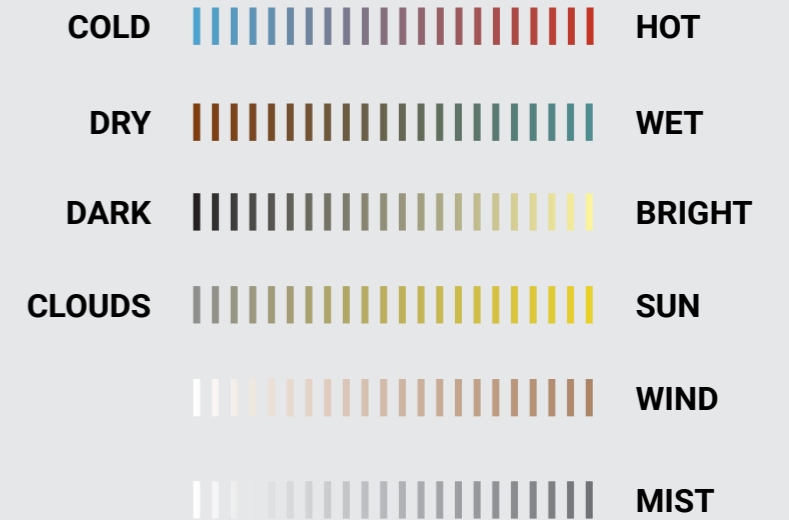
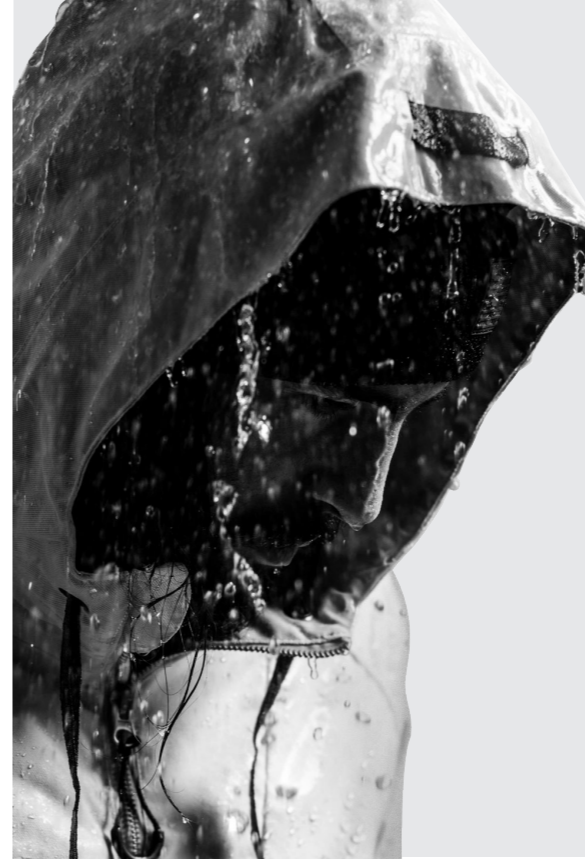


Figure 49. Ranges of possible weather conditions

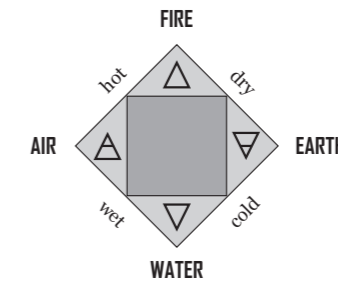


Figure 50. Aristotle's (450 BC.) elements notes their properties

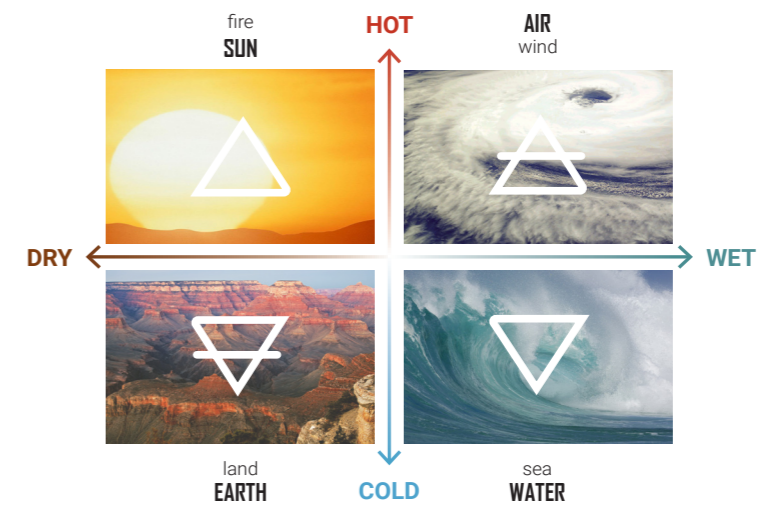


Figure 51. An interpretation of the elements suitable for innovation classification





The elements in the 'Embrace the Elements' strategy allow for classification of Brunotti's core; the boardsports that are the brand's very reason for existence. Through these boardsports, Brunotti's customers can truly embrace the sun, air, earth and water.

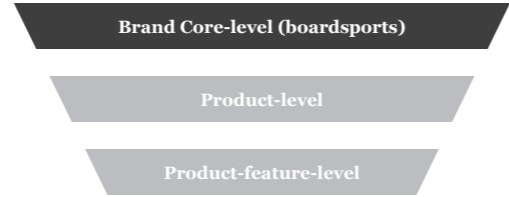
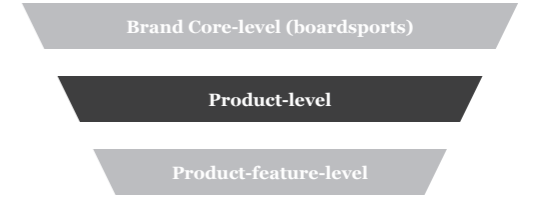


Figure 52. How 'Embrace the Elements' applies to the different boardsports that are Brunotti's very reason for existence (brand core-level)

The elements in the 'Embrace the Elements' strategy allow for classification of Brunotti's products, offering an alternative for the Hardware /Apparel classification. The products convey the message: This product is designed to 'embrace the [element(s)]'.



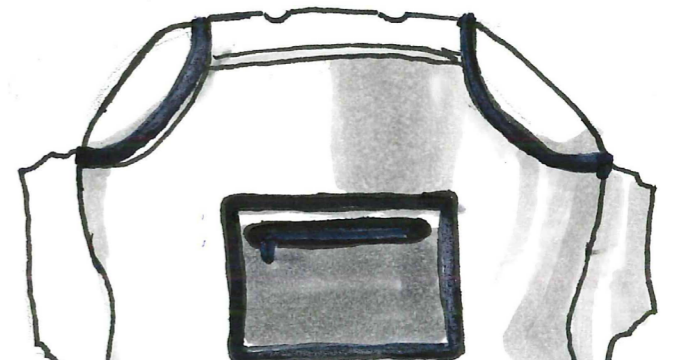
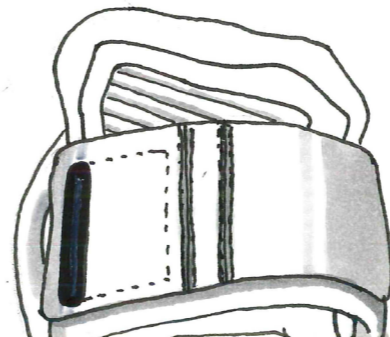
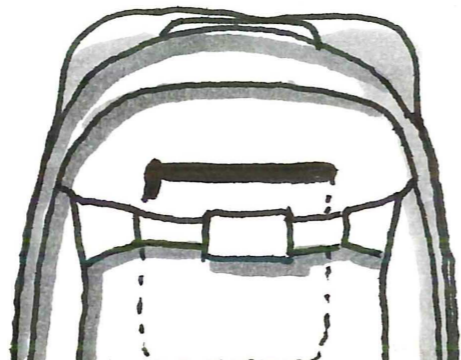
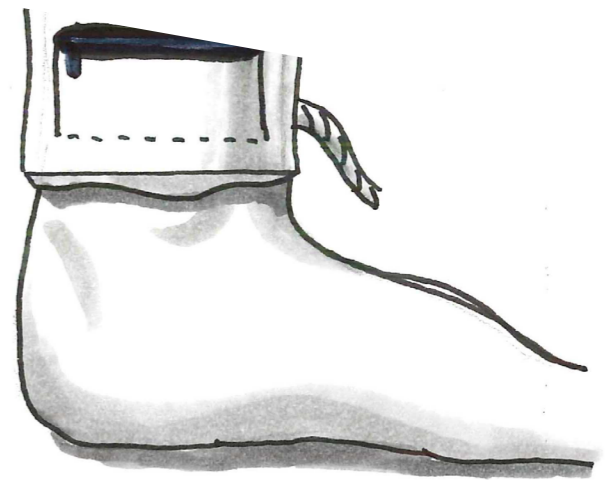
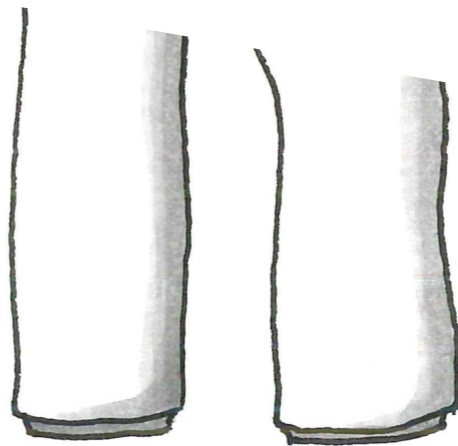
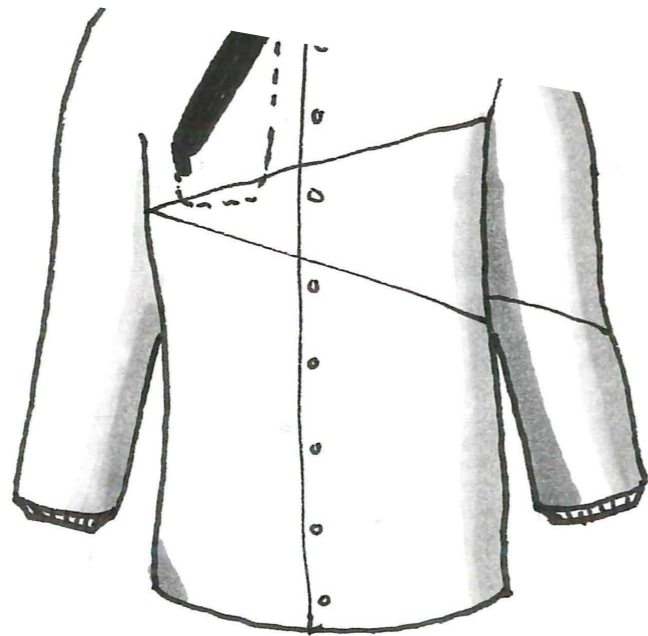
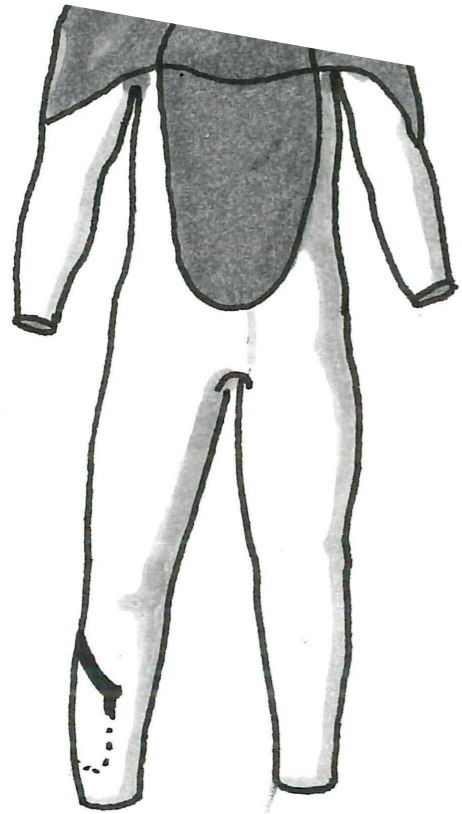
**Designed to  
'Embrace the Elements'**



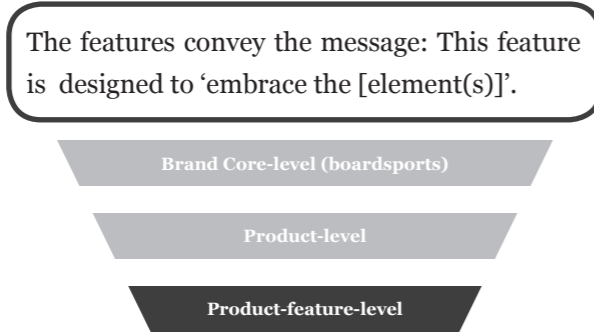
Figure 53. How 'Embrace the Elements' applies to Brunotti's product types (product-level)



# 06 FEATURE IDEAS







## CH. 06.01 IDEA ASSESSMENT

This section goes into how the 'Embrace the Elements' consistency strategy applies to a product-feature level. Whereas the seven boardsports and somewhat 50 products, that are listed before, already exist and merely needed classification, the product-features are generated particularly for this design project. The large number of innovative product-feature ideas in Appendix 08 shows the versatility of the strategy. Not only do the ideas classify as one of the four elements, but they also answer boardsporters' needs and employ new technologies.

Hence, all ideas in Appendix 08 are in the 'solution space' and potentially contribute to answering the design challenge. But, obviously, some ideas are better than others.

### 06.01.01 Idea assessment

To ensure that the selected ideas tackle the design challenge in the best possible way, the design challenge is put to use for guiding the idea assessment process. Thus, besides general likeability and brand fit, different parts of the design challenge functioned as assessment criteria (see Figure 54).

The actual assessment, using the scoring cards, is performed together with Joffrey Delfgaauw (Brunotti's Head of Design) and Cees van de Meeberg (Brunotti's

Development Director) (see Figure 56). Together with green 'like' and red 'dislike' stickers, as shown in Figure 55, the cards led to unanimous decisions in terms of idea selection.

Figure 55 explains how the idea pages are setup. Note that relevant boardsporters' needs, technologies, the classification, and the idea assessment are all displayed on the idea pages. An overview of all idea scores, given by J. Delfgaauw and C. van de Meeberg can be found in Appendix 09.

Note that three additional innovation categories exist in Appendix 08. The categories 'heat', 'electricity' and 'magnetism', cover forces of nature as well, but do not classify as elements. Furthermore, over four categories might lead to confusion rather than consistency. Therefore, together with J. Delfgaauw and C. van de Meeberg, is decided to only continue with the ideas that fit the four-elements classification.

### 06.01.02 Best ideas per category

Though the idea scores are not binding, the highest scoring ideas generally proved to be considered the best ideas in an open discussion after the scoring process. CH. 06.03 - CH. 06.07 show the ideas that became proposed features in the product innovation strategy.



Figure 56. Joffrey Delfgaauw assessing ideas, during an interactive session together with Cees van de Meeberg

### // SCORE CARD

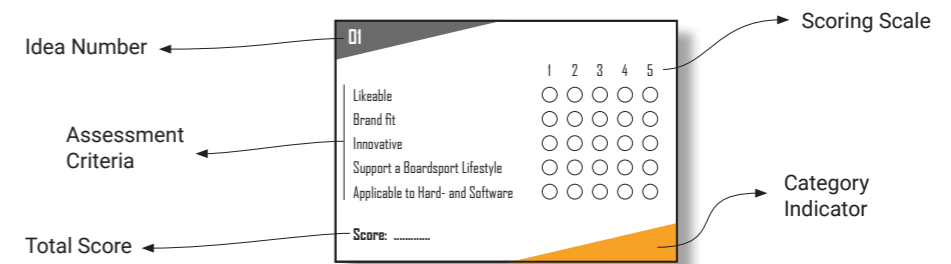


Figure 54. Example of score card, used to assess ideas

### // IDEA CARD

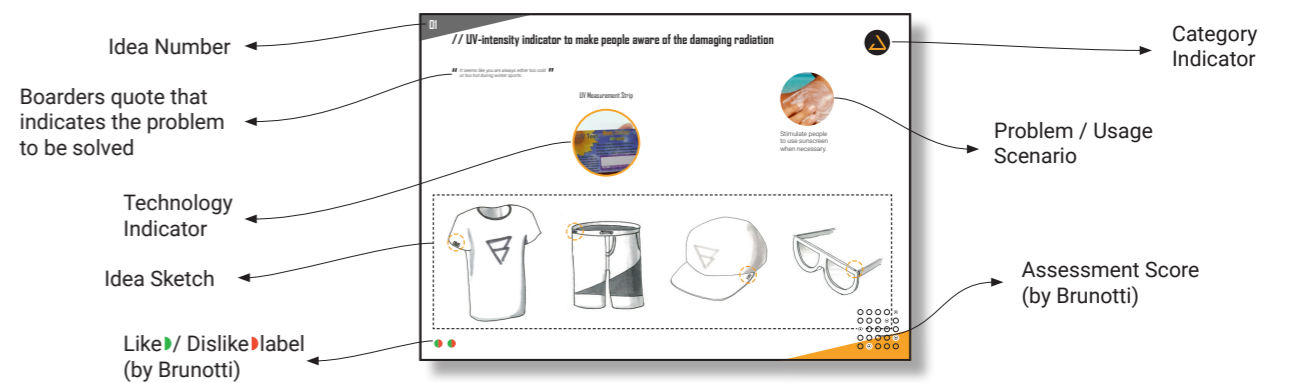


Figure 55. Example of a idea page, as presented in Appendix 08

## CH. 06.02 PRODUCT-FEATURE IDEAS

The next few chapters show the ideas that contribute to the 'four elements' strategy and answer the design challenge. Note that some ideas have a low overall score. Though not answering all parts of the design challenge, these ideas serve an important purpose, namely: strengthening the recognisability of the 'four element' strategy.

Before going into detail on the selected ideas, it is important to bring the so-called 'operation indicators' and the 'icon product' to the attention.

### 06.02.01 Operation indicator

Illustrated in Figure 57 and Figure 70, two of the four elements (sun and water) are supported with an operation indicator. These so-called operation indicators are special markings that indicate the presence, absence or even intensity of respectively UV-radiation and water. Using special inks, the indicators allow for a better product-user interaction, by indicating when an innovative feature is actually active. Other than that, these colour-changing markings are more striking than normal ones.

### 06.02.02 Icon product

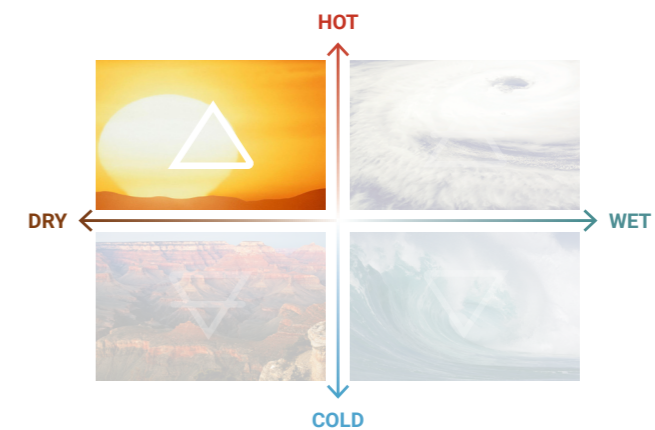
One product idea, being a Brunotti backpack, serves as an icon of the element-strategy. In this product all elements

coincide. The iconic product can function as showcase of the consistency strategy, for example at the first market introduction. The iconic product is illustrated in Figure 74 on page 92.

### 06.02.03 Ideas

As said before, the next few chapters go into specific innovative products-feature ideas that embody the 'embrace the elements' consistency strategy and answer the design challenge. It is important to carefully look at these ideas to understand how they could be applied to other Brunotti products as well. CH. 07.01 explains to what Brunotti products the ideas could apply, besides the examples as given in the next few chapters.

## CH. 06.03 EMBRACE THE SUN



### OPERATION INDICATOR

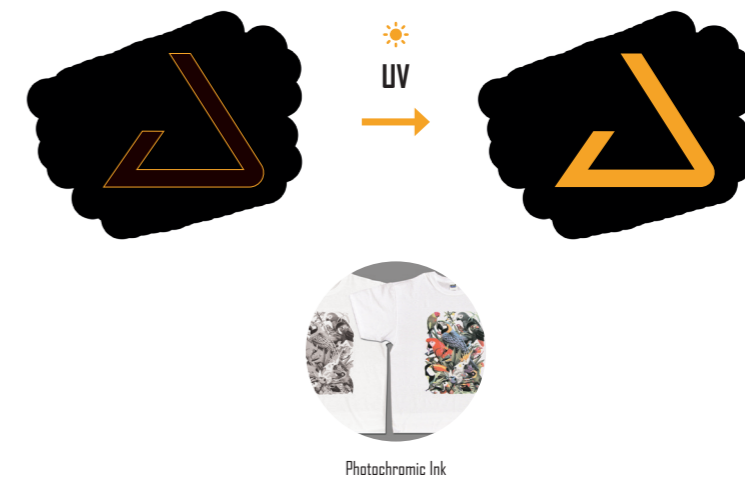


Figure 57. The SUN-operation indicator indicates the presence or intensity of sunlight.



Figure 58. Photochromic ink is used to put UV-measurement strips on Brunotti's products to warn for damaging radiation.

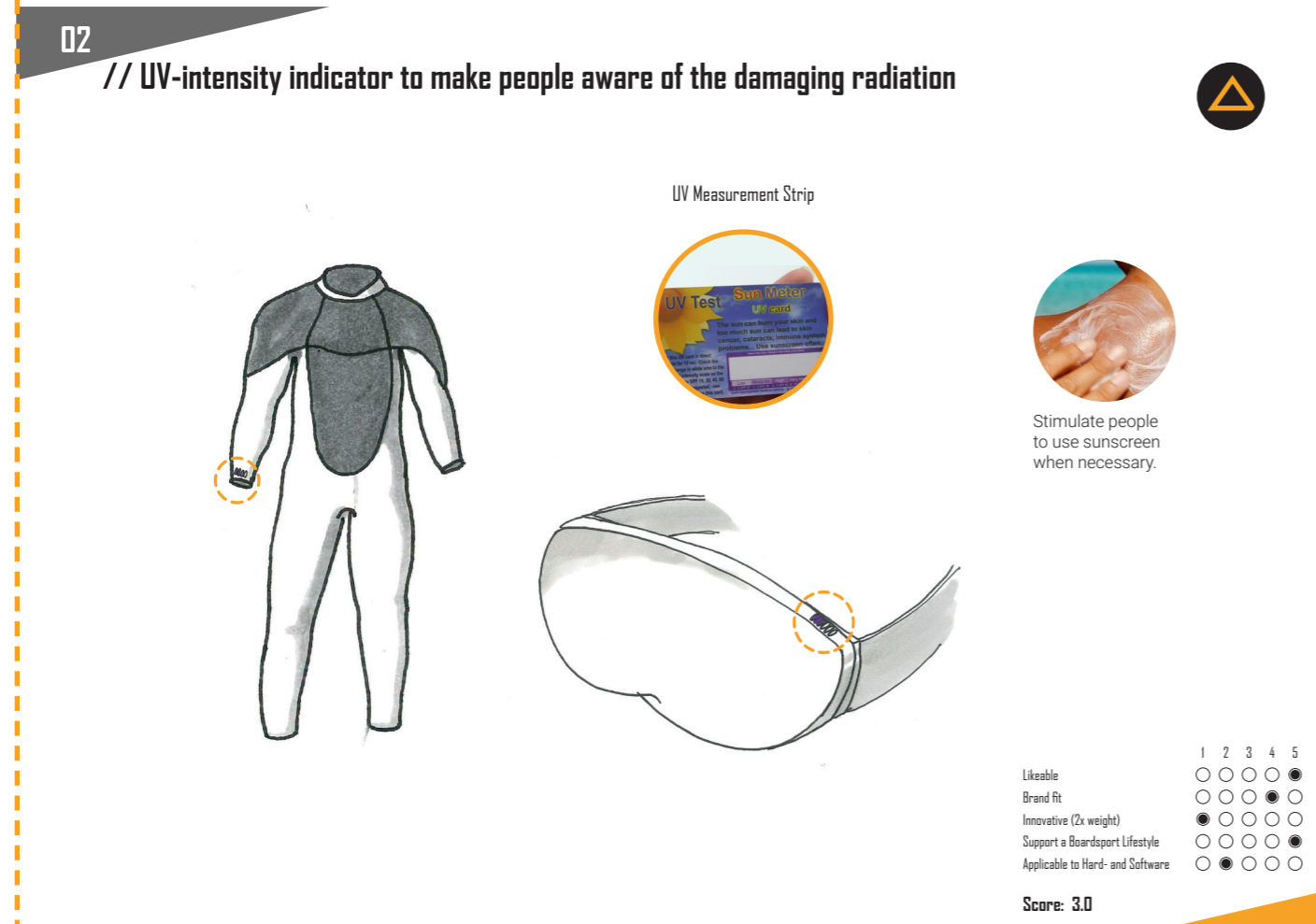
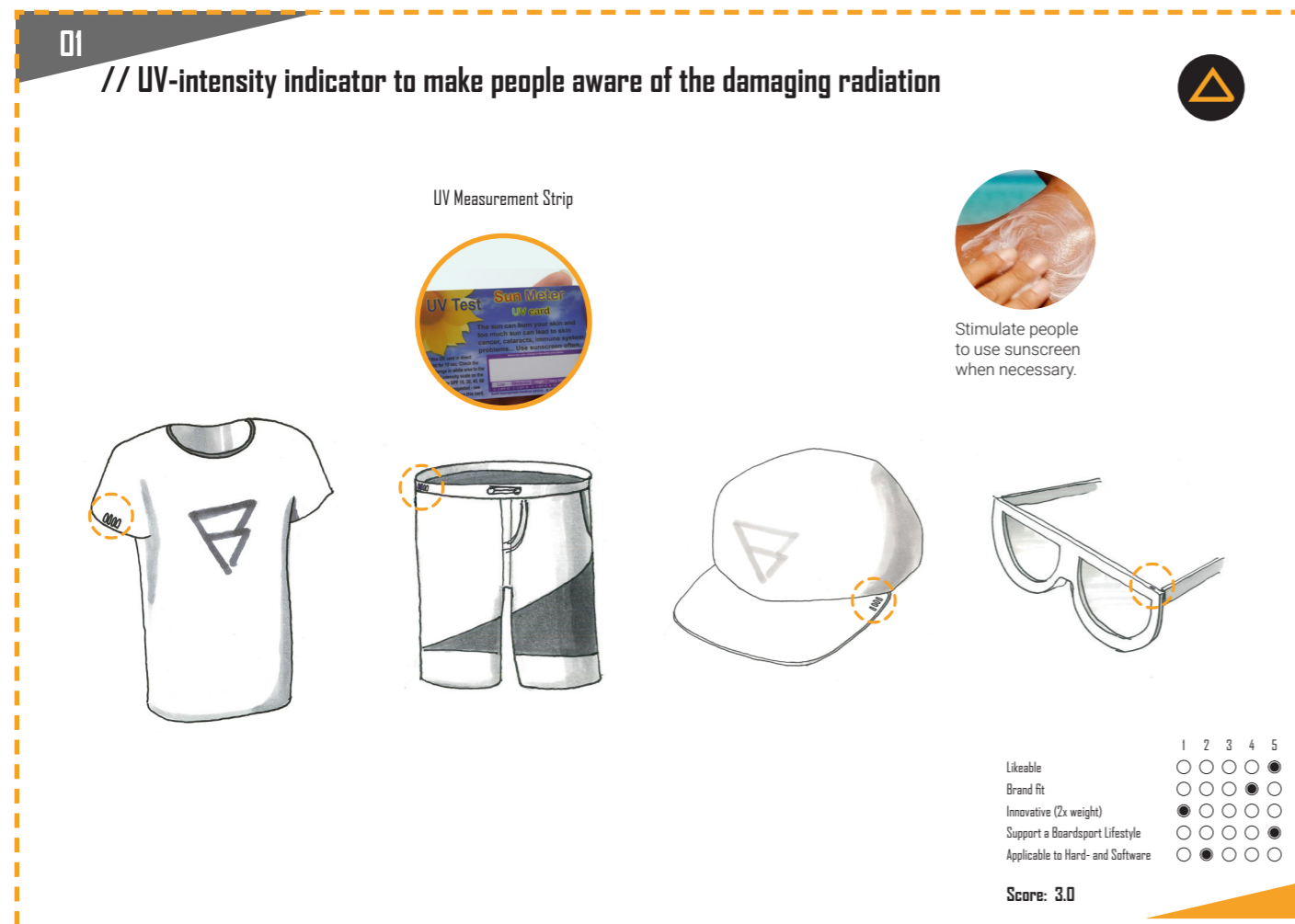


Figure 59. Flexible solar panels are integrated into Brunotti's products for charging electronic devices 'on the go'.

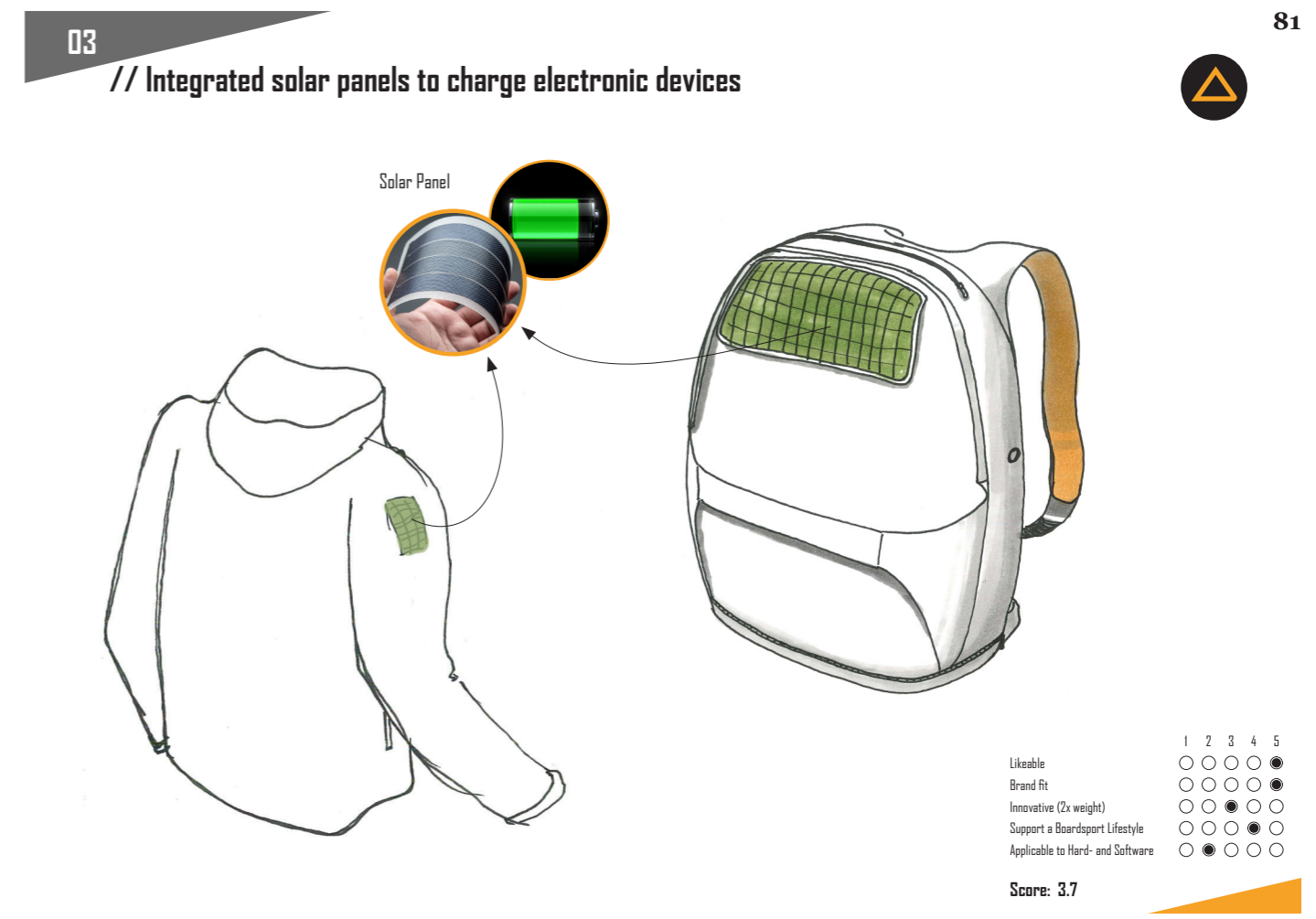
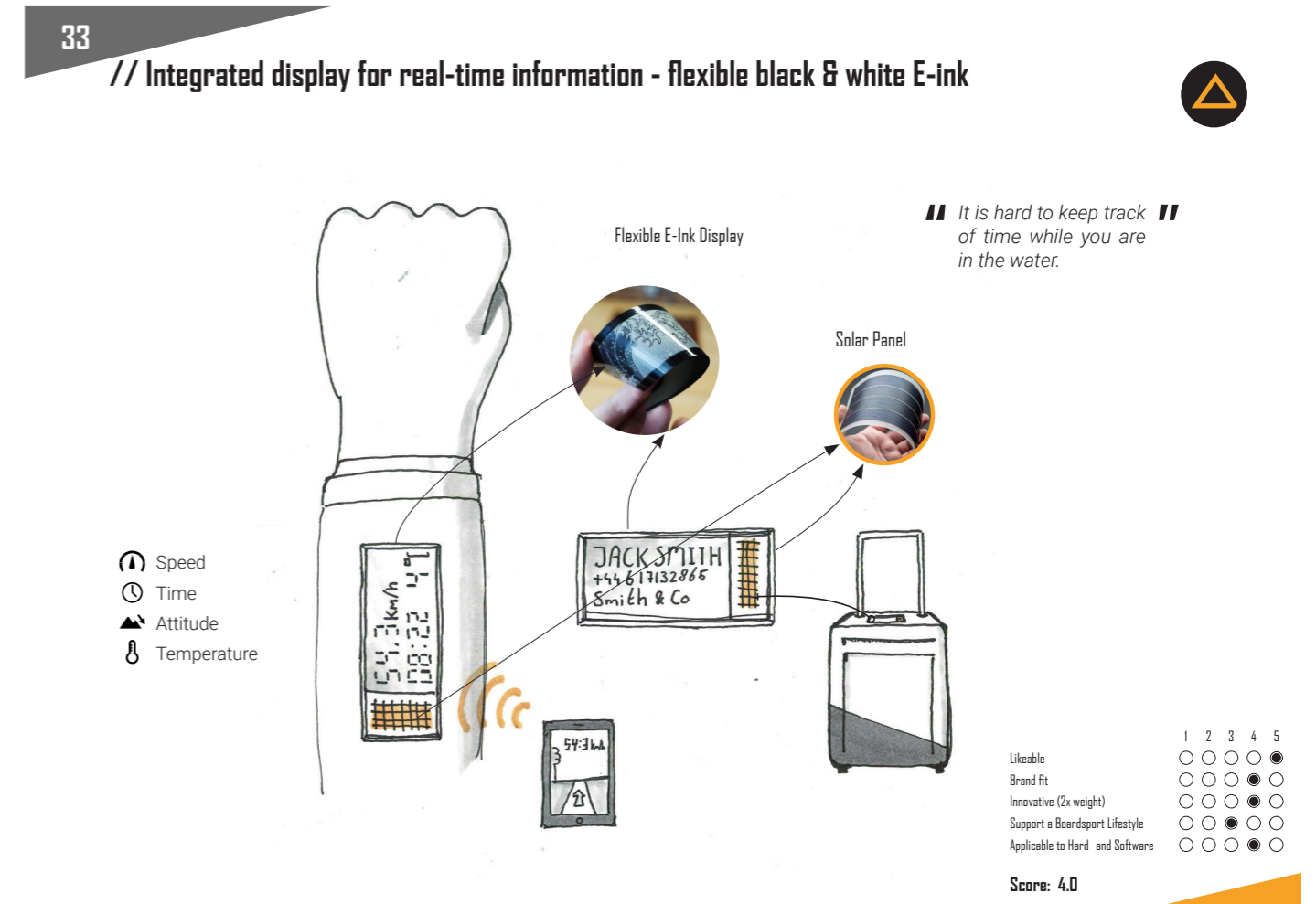


Figure 60. Flexible solar panels are integrated into Brunotti's products together with Flexible displays to give (real-time) information.



# EMBRACE

## CH. 06.04 EMBRACE THE AIR

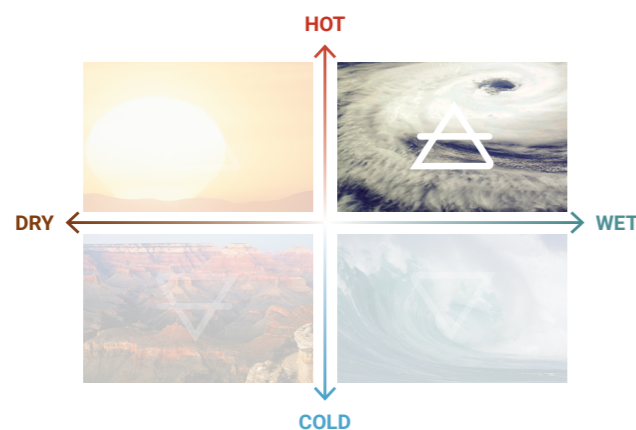
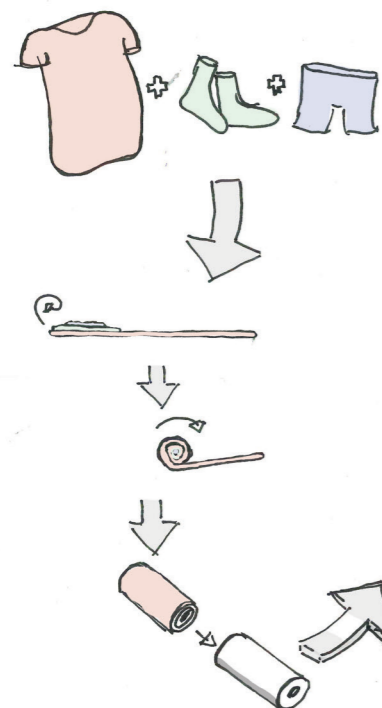


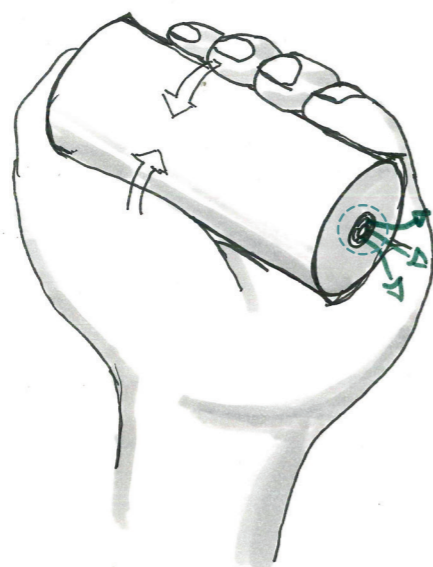
Figure 61. A small vacuum pack is attached to Brunotti clothing, so it can be rolled up, squeezed and reduced in size for easy packing.

13

### // Vacuum squeeze pack to easily take an extra set of clothes



It is always hard to keep your socks dry.



	1	2	3	4	5
Likeability	○	○	○	○	●
Brand fit	○	○	○	○	●
Innovative (2x weight)	○	○	○	○	●
Support a Boardsport Lifestyle	○	○	○	○	●
Applicable to Hard- and Software	○	○	○	○	●

Score: 4.7

Figure 62. Air inlets, that can be opened and closed in a jiffy, allow the user to regulate his/her body temperature.

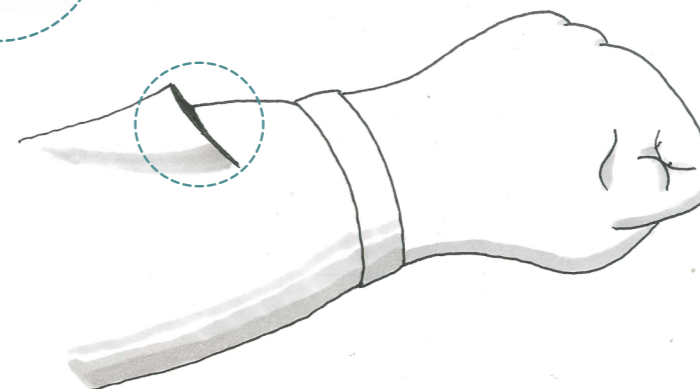
09

### // Closable air inlet to cool body down

Air Inlet



It seems like you are always either too cold or too hot during winter sports.



	1	2	3	4	5
Likeable	○	○	○	○	○
Brand fit	○	○	○	○	○
Innovative (2x weight)	○	○	○	○	○
Support a Boardsport Lifestyle	○	○	○	○	○
Applicable to Hard- and Software	○	○	○	○	○

Score: 4.0

Figure 63. Instead of using outer straps, this Brunotti backpack can easily be reduced in size by squeezing out extra air.

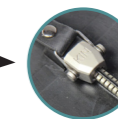
12

### // Integrated vacuum compartment to decrease backpack size

It is hard to sit in the ski lift with a full backpack on.

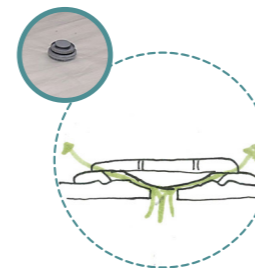


Water- and Airtight Zipper



Vacuum Bag

Vacuum Valve



	1	2	3	4	5
Likeable	○	○	○	○	○
Brand fit	○	○	○	○	○
Innovative (2x weight)	○	○	○	○	○
Support a Boardsport Lifestyle	○	○	○	○	○
Applicable to Hard- and Software	○	○	○	○	○

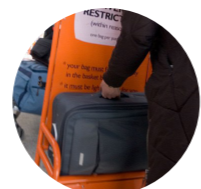
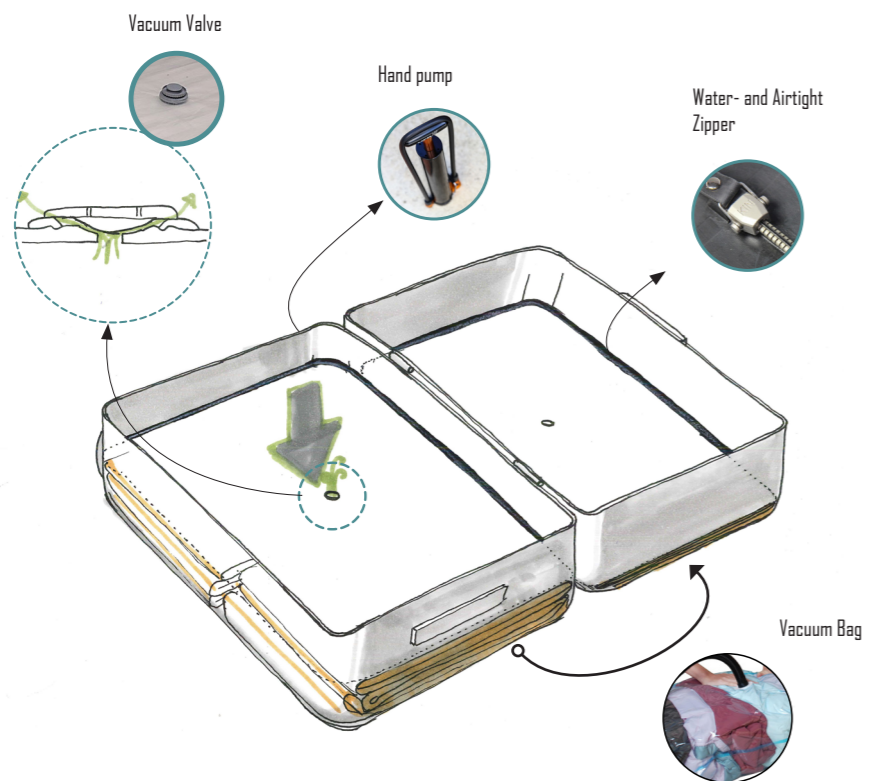
Score: 2.8



Figure 64. An integrated vacuum compartment allows for storing much more in Brunotti's travel- and board bags, by squeezing/sucking out extra air.

10

// Integrated vacuum compartment for clothes to increase room



Bring a lot, but pack small and avoid having to pay extra.

	1	2	3	4	5
Likeable	○	○	○	○	●
Brand fit	○	○	○	○	○
Innovative (2x weight)	○	○	○	○	○
Support a Boardsport Lifestyle	○	○	○	○	○
Applicable to Hard- and Software	○	○	○	○	○

Score: 4.8

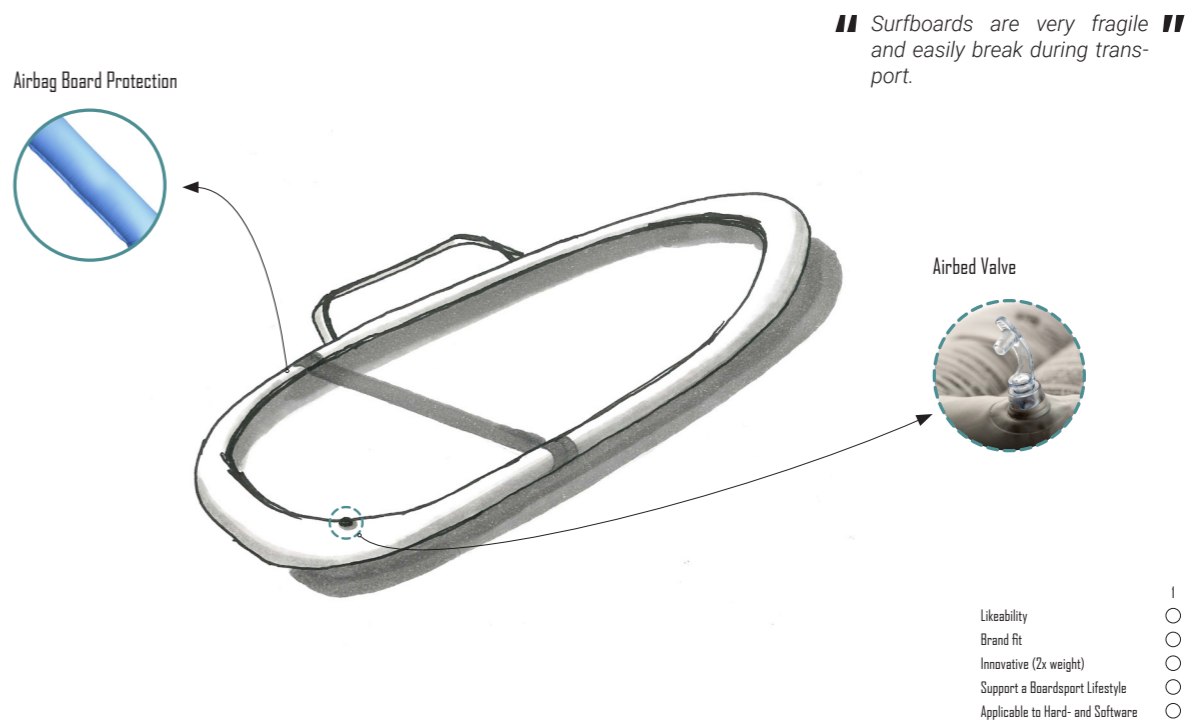


Figure 65. This integrated inflatable airbag protects whatever is in your bag and only when you want it to.

85

14

// Integrated inflatable airbag to protect your board during travel



Surfboards are very fragile and easily break during transport.

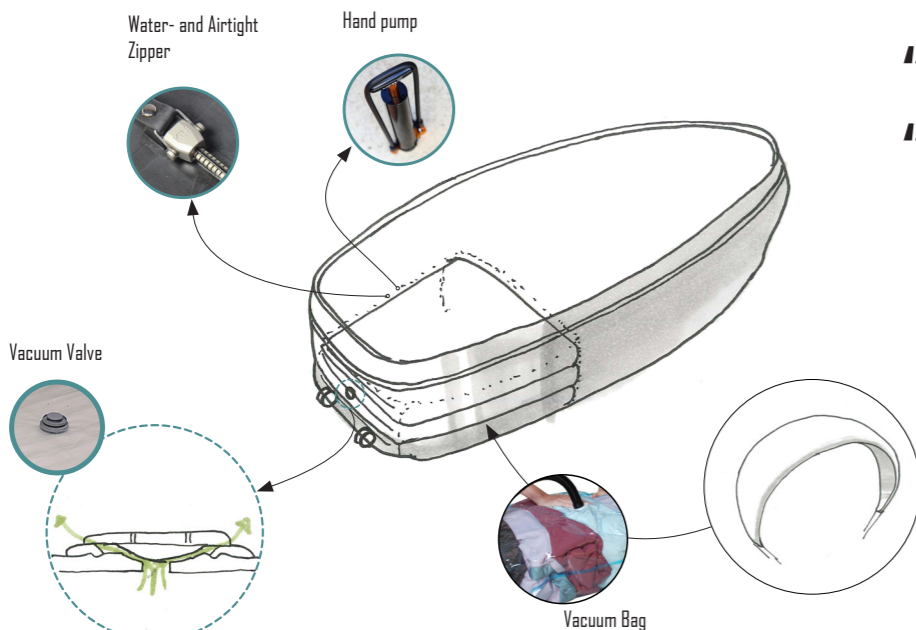
	1	2	3	4	5
Likeability	○	○	○	○	○
Brand fit	○	○	○	○	○
Innovative (2x weight)	○	○	○	○	○
Support a Boardsport Lifestyle	○	○	○	○	○
Applicable to Hard- and Software	○	○	○	○	○

Score: 4.7

Figure 66. This integrated air pillow offers a comfortable headrest during travel or when you are laying down.

11

// Integrated vacuum compartment for kite/clothes to decrease bag size



It is hard to travel with all your (kite) surf stuff by bike.  
It is hard to everything in your car.

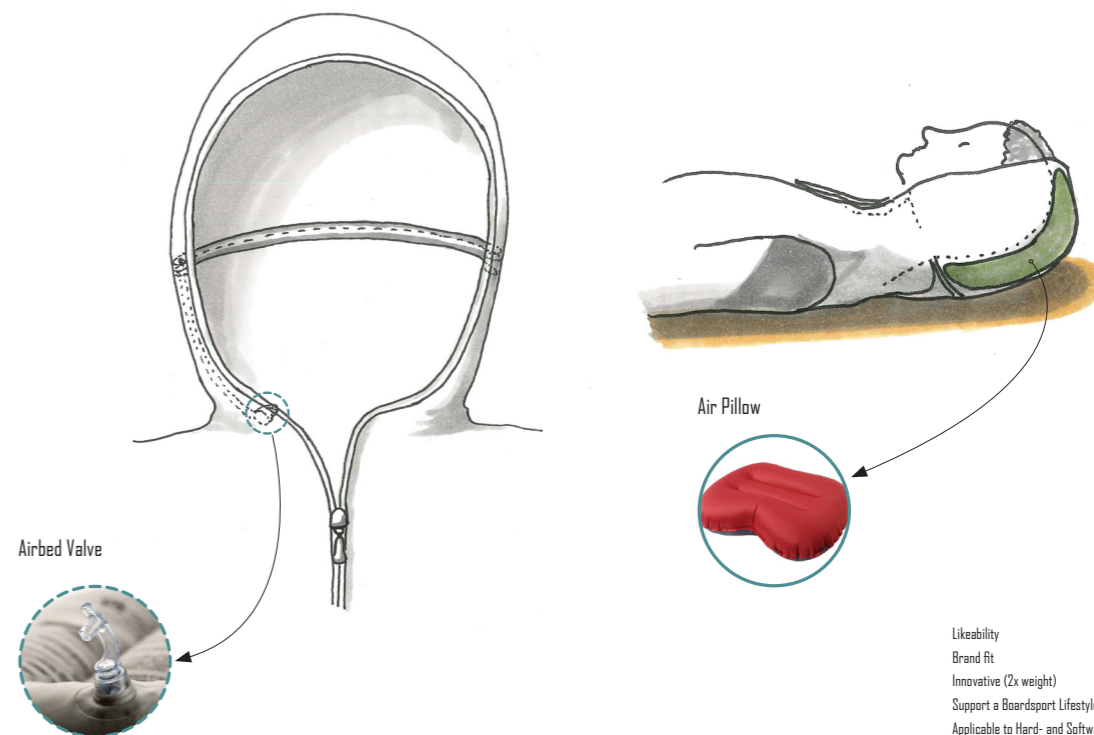
	1	2	3	4	5
Likeable	○	○	○	○	○
Brand fit	○	○	○	○	○
Innovative (2x weight)	○	○	○	○	○
Support a Boardsport Lifestyle	○	○	○	○	○
Applicable to Hard- and Software	○	○	○	○	○

Score: 4.8



16

// Integrated air pillow in sweater/jacket for relaxing and travelling



	1	2	3	4	5
Likeability	○	○	○	○	○
Brand fit	○	○	○	○	○
Innovative (2x weight)	○	○	○	○	○
Support a Boardsport Lifestyle	○	○	○	○	○
Applicable to Hard- and Software	○	○	○	○	○

Score: 3.2

## CH. 06.05 EMBRACE THE EARTH

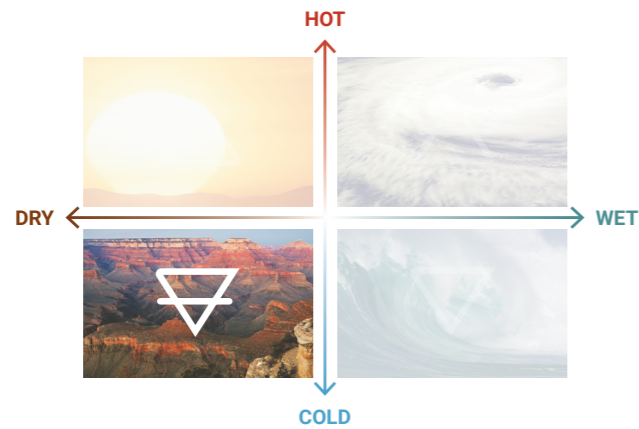


Figure 67. This integrated sand-permeable mat allows you to keep the dirt off while changing on the beach.

20

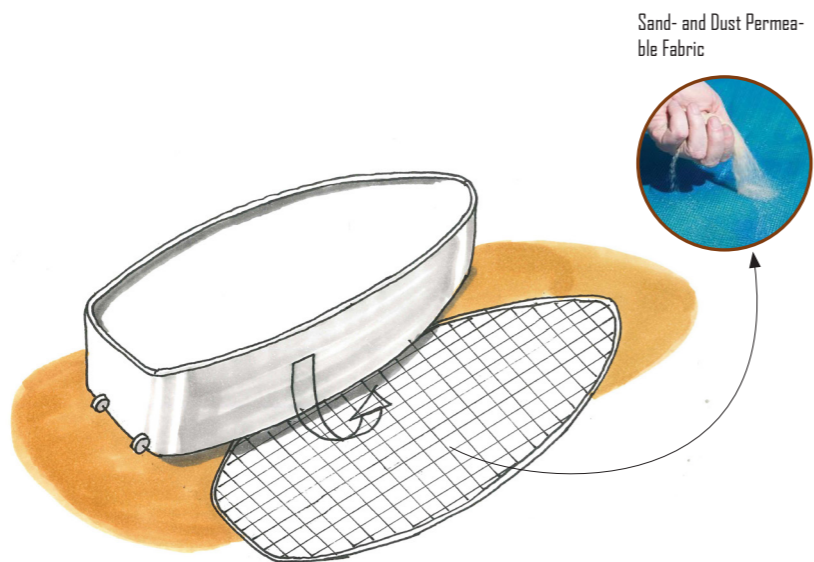
### // Integrated sand- and dust permeable mat in board bag for comfortable changing

Wetsuits always get dirty when you change at the beach.

Sand gets everywhere, practising surfing or at the beach in general.



Keep yourself sand-free while changing.



Sand- and Dust Permeable Fabric

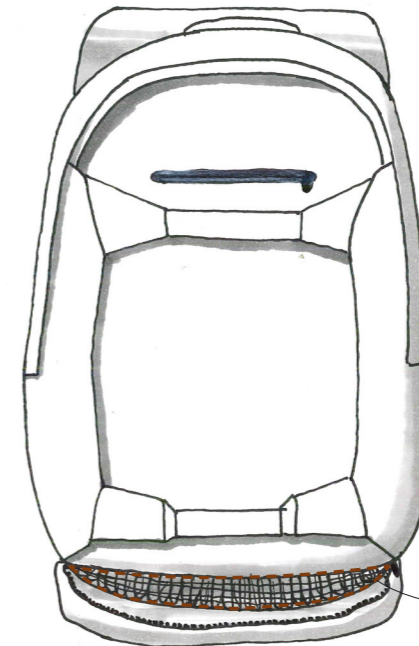
Likeable	○	○	●	○	○
Brand fit	○	○	○	○	○
Innovative (2x weight)	○	○	○	○	○
Support a Boardsport Lifestyle	○	○	○	○	○
Applicable to Hard- and Software	○	○	○	○	○

Score: 3.0

Figure 68. Integrated sand-permeable fabric allows the user to easily remove sand after a 'day-at-the-beach'.

18

### // Sand- and dust permeable fabric to easily remove dirt from bag



Sand- and Dust Permeable Fabric

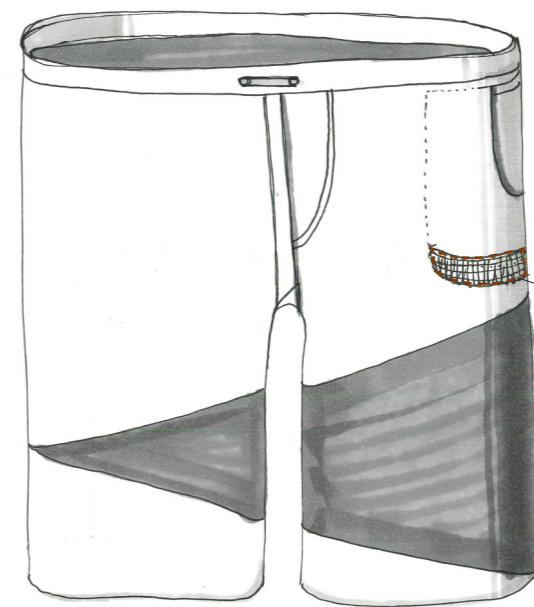
Sand gets everywhere, practising surfing or at the beach in general.

Likeable	○	○	○	○	○
Brand fit	○	○	○	○	○
Innovative (2x weight)	○	○	○	○	○
Support a Boardsport Lifestyle	○	○	○	○	○
Applicable to Hard- and Software	○	○	○	○	○

Score: 4.2

19

### // Sand- and dust permeable fabric to easily remove dirt from pockets



Sand- and Dust Permeable Fabric

Sand gets everywhere, practising surfing or at the beach in general.

Likeable	○	○	○	○	○
Brand fit	○	○	○	○	○
Innovative (2x weight)	○	○	○	○	○
Support a Boardsport Lifestyle	○	○	○	○	○
Applicable to Hard- and Software	○	○	○	○	○

Score: 4.2



Figure 69. A sand-tight closure allows the user to bury their Brunotti bag under the sand, so they can comfortably leave it behind for a while.

// Burial bag to hide your valuable belongings



During a surfing session and when going to the beach in general, it is hard to keep your (electrical car-) keys and money safe and dry.

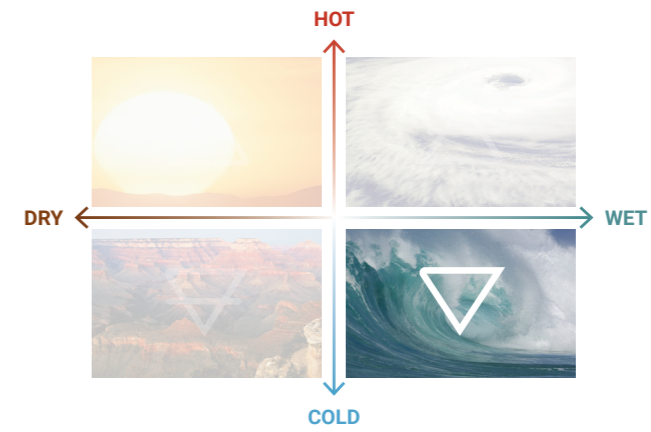
Airtight (non-sand permeable) bag with recognisable ending

	1	2	3	4	5
Likeability	○	○	○	○	●
Brand fit	○	○	○	○	○
Innovative (2x weight)	○	○	○	○	○
Support a Boardsport Lifestyle	○	○	○	○	○
Applicable to Hard- and Software	○	○	○	○	○

Score: 4.5



CH. 06.06 EMBRACE THE WATER



OPERATION INDICATOR

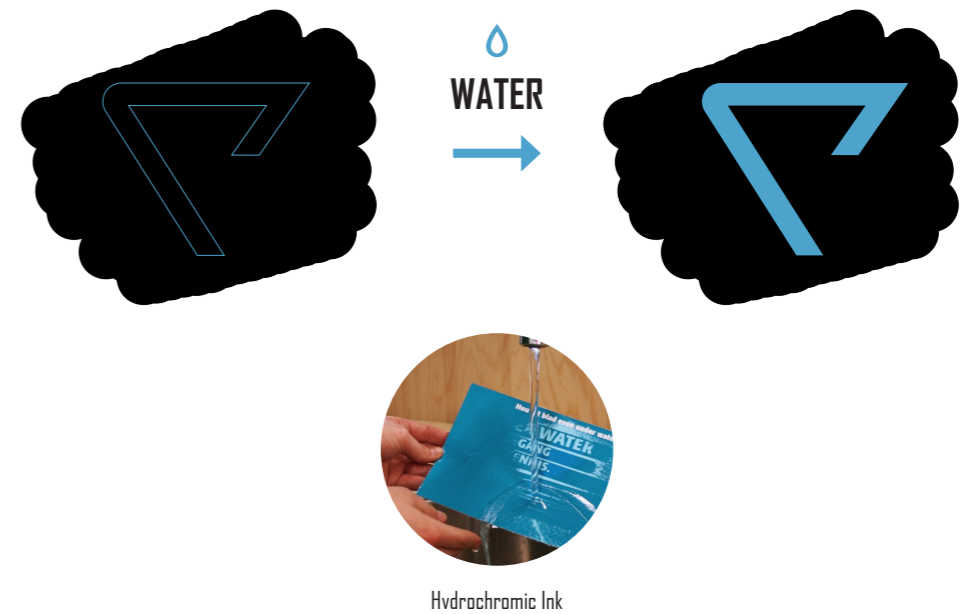
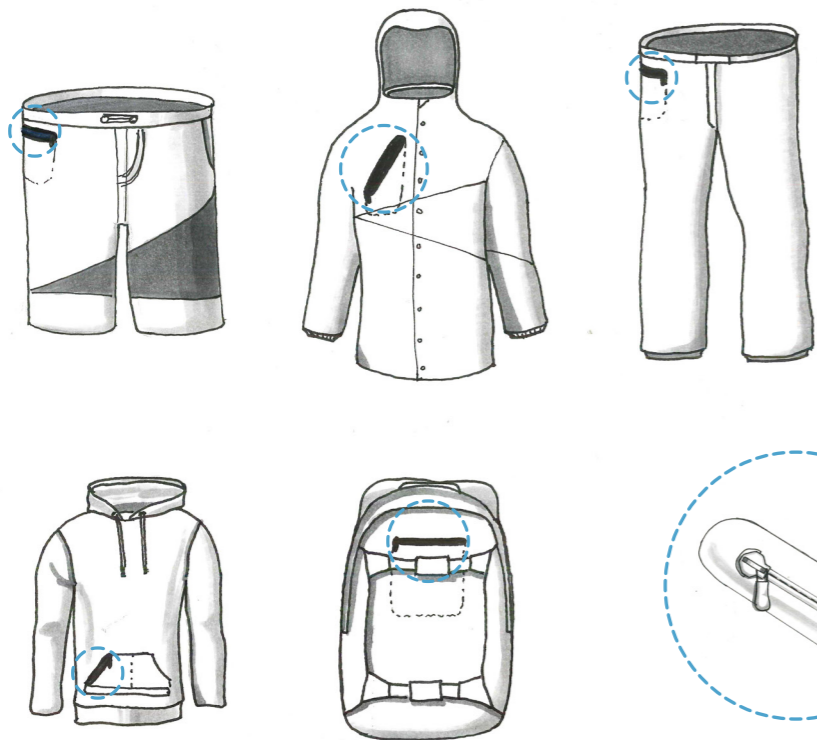


Figure 70. The WATER-operation indicator indicates the presence of water on a Brunotti product.

Figure 71. Water-tight pockets/compartments allow users to always keep their stuff dry, whether it is during heavy rainfall or even in the sea.

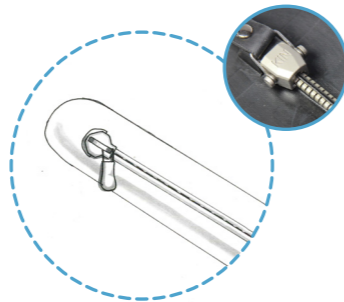
23

// Fully water tight zippers to protect pocket content in water/snow



“ During a surfing session and when going to the beach in general, it is hard to keep your (electrical car-) keys and money safe and dry. ”

Water- and Airtight Zipper



Likeability	○	○	○	○	●
Brand fit	○	○	○	○	●
Innovative (2x weight)	○	○	○	○	●
Support a Boardsport Lifestyle	○	○	○	○	●
Applicable to Hard- and Software	○	○	○	○	●

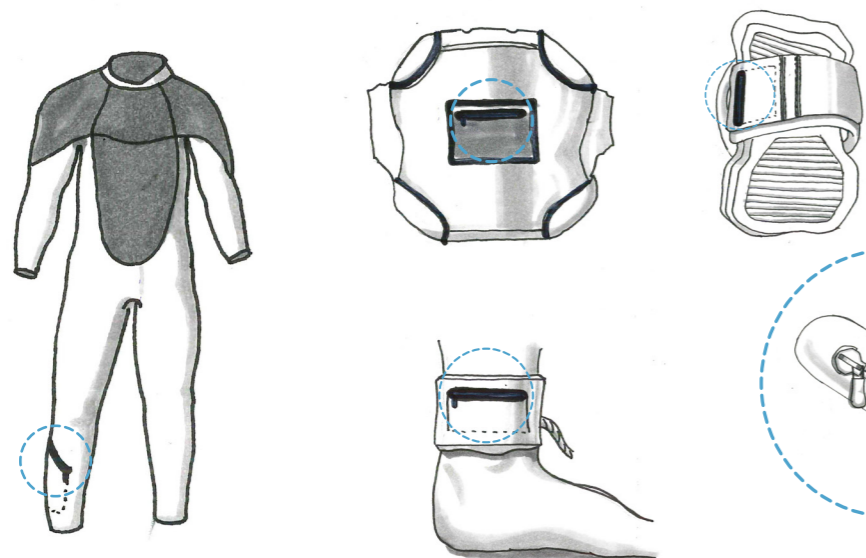
Score: 5.0

24

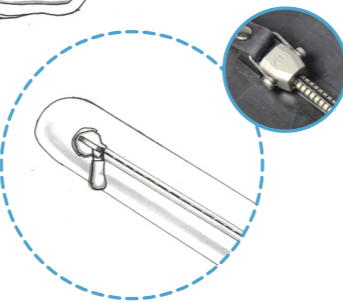
// Fully water tight zippers to protect pocket content in water/snow



“ During a surfing session and when going to the beach in general, it is hard to keep your (electrical car-) keys and money safe and dry. ”



Water- and Airtight Zipper



Likeability	○	○	○	○	●
Brand fit	○	○	○	○	●
Innovative (2x weight)	○	○	○	○	●
Support a Boardsport Lifestyle	○	○	○	○	●
Applicable to Hard- and Software	○	○	○	○	●

Score: 5.0

Figure 72. A water-tight compartment allows the user to separate its wet stuff from its dry stuff.

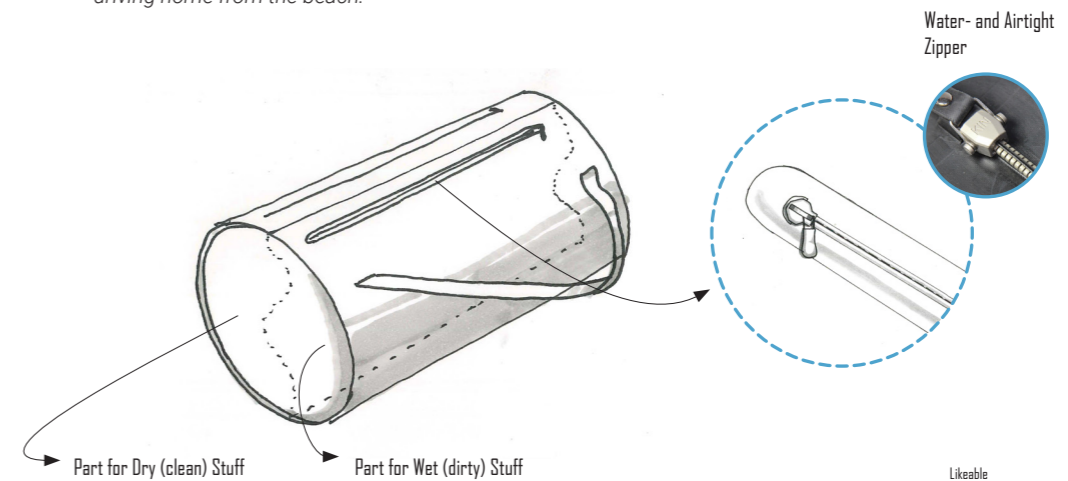
25

// Fully water tight compartment to separate wet from dry stuff



“ Where do I leave all my wet stuff after surfing? ”

“ My car always gets wet after driving home from the beach. ”



Water- and Airtight Zipper



Likeable	○	○	○	○	●
Brand fit	○	○	○	○	●
Innovative (2x weight)	○	○	○	○	●
Support a Boardsport Lifestyle	○	○	○	○	●
Applicable to Hard- and Software	○	○	○	○	●

Score: 3.7

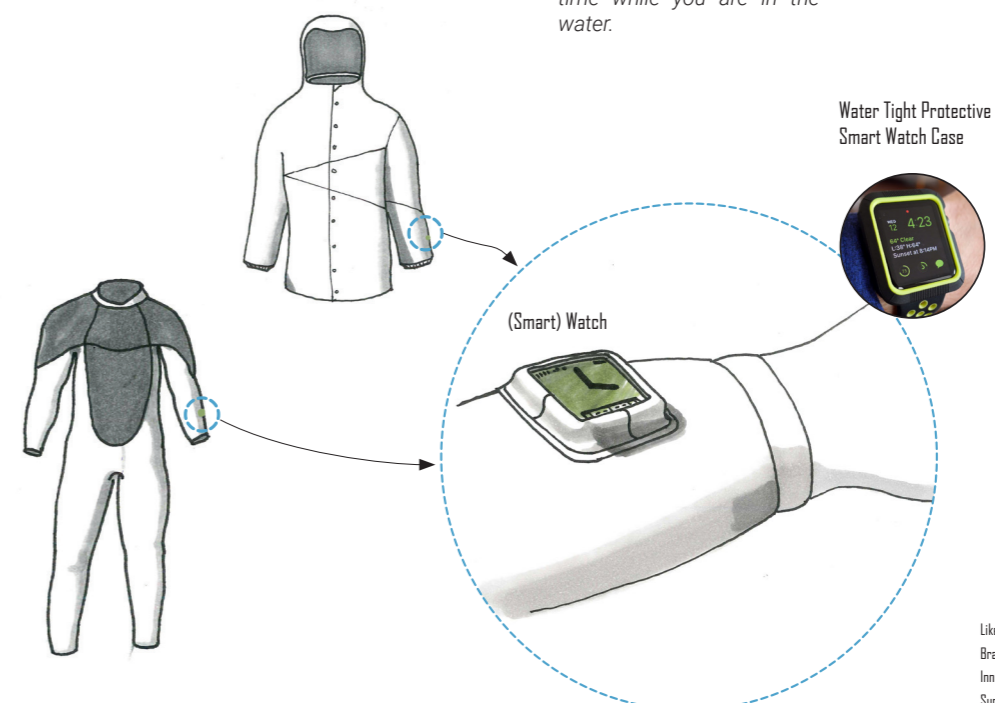
Figure 73. An integrated water-tight protective smart watch case, allows the user to keep using it while practising a boardsport.

26

// Integrated water- and air proof smart watch holder



“ It is hard to keep track of time while you are in the water. ”



Water Tight Protective Smart Watch Case



Likeable	○	○	○	○	●
Brand fit	○	○	○	○	●
Innovative (2x weight)	○	○	○	○	●
Support a Boardsport Lifestyle	○	○	○	○	●
Applicable to Hard- and Software	○	○	○	○	●

Score: 4.5





# CH. 06.07 EMBRACE THE ELEMENTS

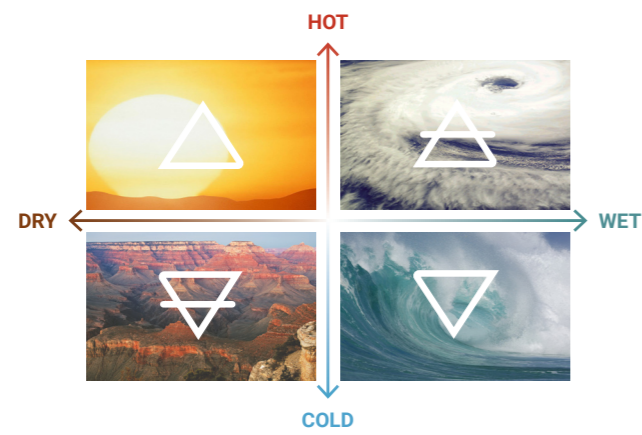
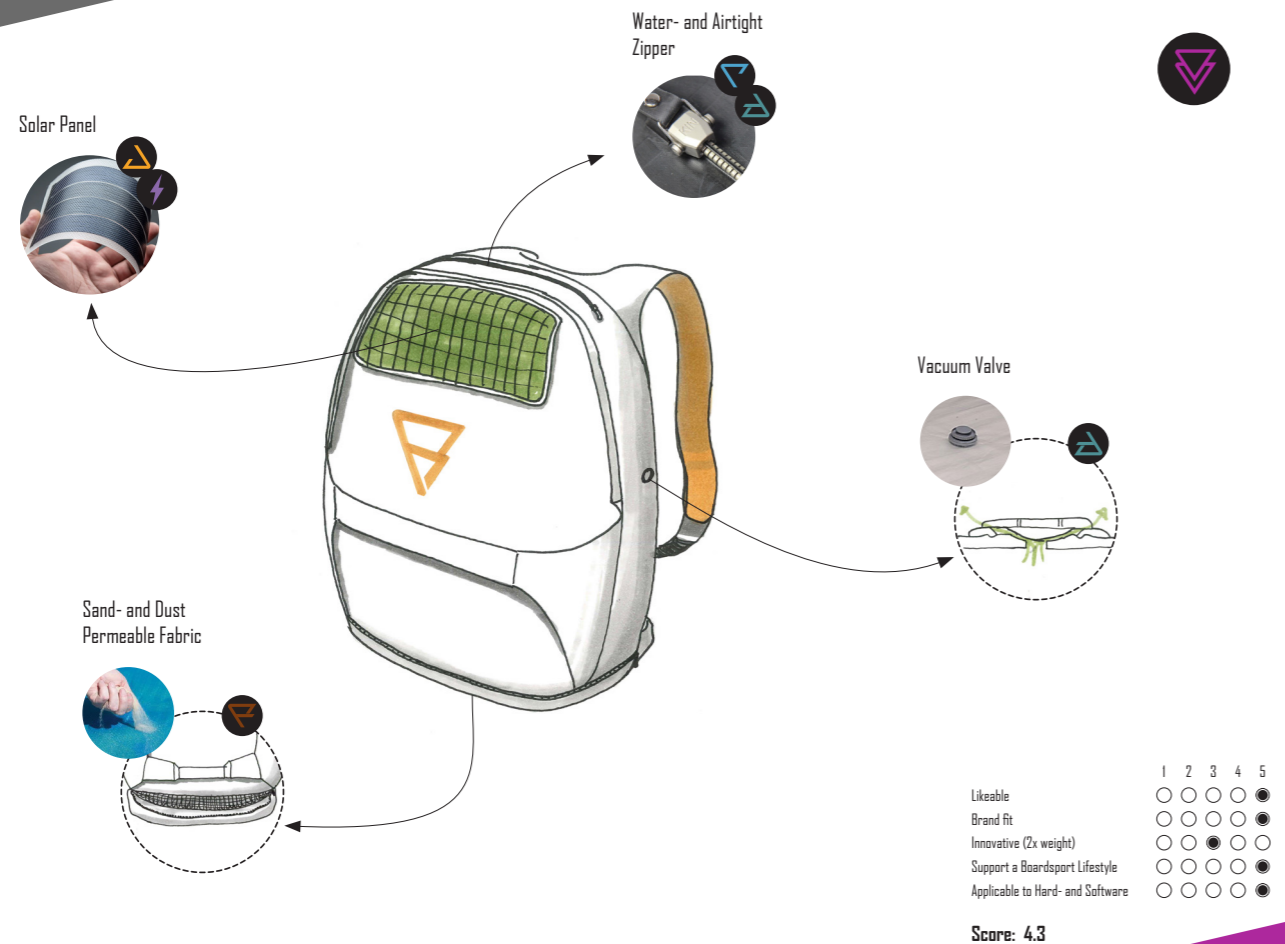


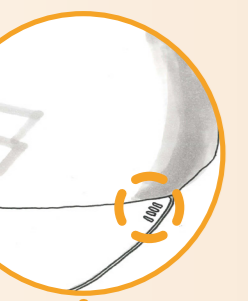
Figure 74. In this iconic Brunotti backpack, that contains a combination of features, the four elements coincide.



# 07 STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION

2020

2021



## CH. 07.01 PRODUCT-FEATURE APPLICABILITY

The product-features prove that, indeed, innovative and element-classified product features exist to support a boardsport lifestyle. Thus, the element classification suits to create consistency throughout Brunotti's product portfolio. However, the strategy gets much more valuable, from a consistency-creating perspective, if the features are applicable to multiple Brunotti products. In light of this assignment, this particularly goes for applicability to both hardware- and apparel products.

Note in Figure 75, how 'Permeable' and 'Tight' are opposites, and how 'Absorbent' and 'Repellent' are opposites.

### 07.01.01 Applicability overview

Therefore, Figure 76 on page 98 gives an overview of the possible application of the features to multiple Brunotti products. Other than that, the figure shows to what features the 'operation indicators' can be applied, how the iconic product cover all elements, and even how similarities on a technique-level occur.

### 07.01.02 Classes

Besides the element main-classification, sub-classes are introduced. Figure 75 shows these classes. The purpose of the sub-classes is to make the function of the particular innovations easier to understand for the users. For example, the valve-based innovations are not just 'AIR' innovations, but more specifically, 'AIR-tight' innovations. Figure 76 shows how all features fit these sub-classifications.

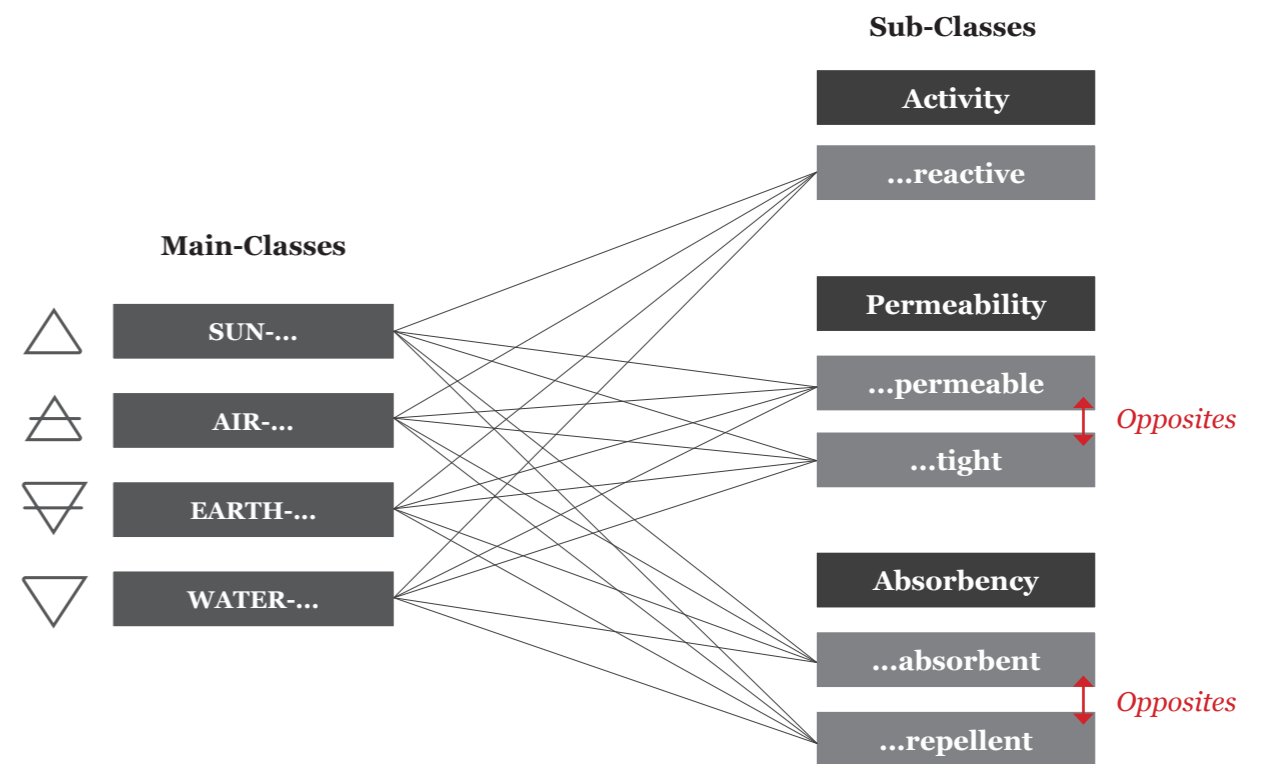


Figure 75. The marking's sub-classes system to make the function easier to understand for the user.

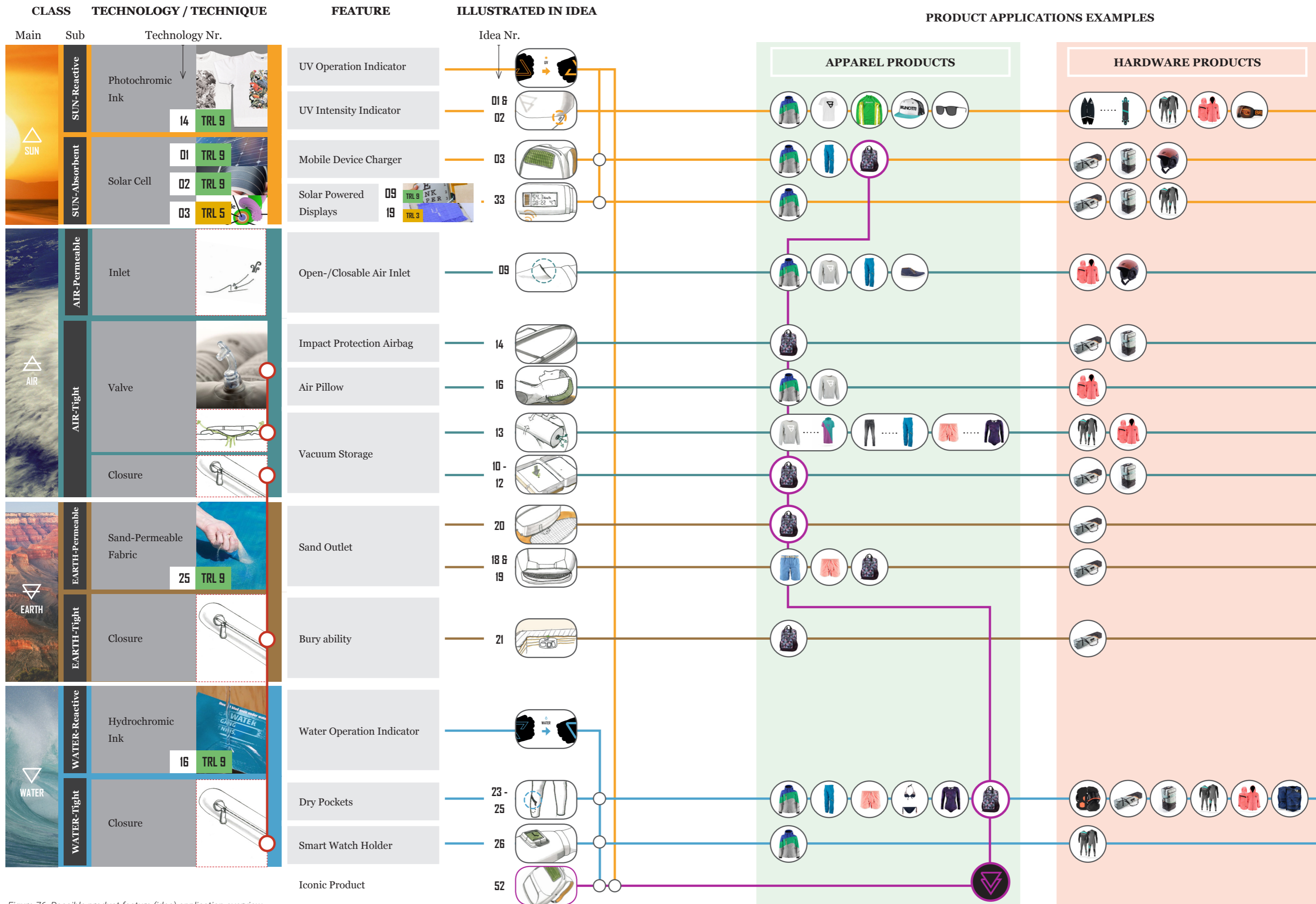


Figure 76. Possible product-feature (idea) application overview





NOW

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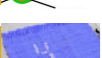
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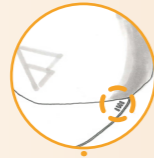
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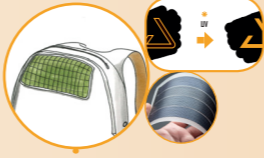
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- 02 TRL 9 
- 09 TRL 9 
- 03 TRL 5 
- 19 TRL 3 

Features >

01 & 02



03



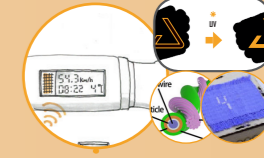
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03



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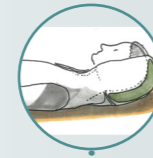


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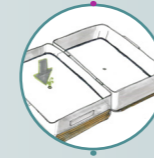
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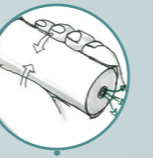
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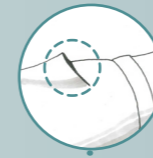
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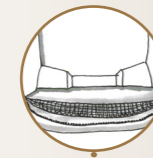


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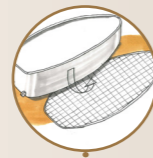


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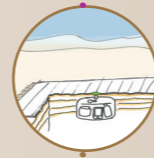
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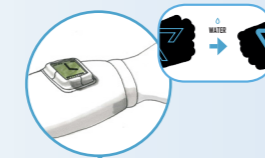


25 TRL 9

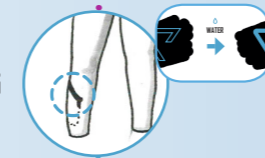


Features >

26



23 - 25



16 TRL 9



Iconic Product >

52



Feature

Technology/Technique Development

New Application

Feature Market Introduction

Figure 79. An overview of the technology's/technique's development period and the product feature market introduction



**08**  
**SHOWCASE**





# CH. 08.01 WORKING PROTOTYPE

As briefly touched upon in CH. 07.02, together with C. van de Meeberg and J. Delfgaauw, idea 10 was selected to be prototyped. The working prototype serves as a real-life showcase of how the strategy is employable on a product-feature (innovation) level. Furthermore, the prototype allows for better communication with Brunotti's manufacturers, and thereby, accelerates the development process. This chapter briefly goes into the prototype's working principle and associated legal issues. The next chapters (CH. 08.02 and CH. 08.03) show what the product could like in Brunotti's brochure and briefly touch upon pricing.

Technical specifications are far outside the scope of this project and are therefore deliberately discussed in this report.

## 08.01.01 Working principle

Idea 10 is an integrated vacuum compartment in a Brunotti trolley, that allows the user to fit more stuff within the same volume. Since the idea's operation relies on the use of vacuum, it is vital to make the compartment airtight. Figure 81 shows multiple ways of creating an airtight closure, inspired by everyday products. From this, eight working principle emerged (see Figure 82). Several aspects played an important role in deciding what working principle would be used in the prototype; airtightness, failure sensitivity, ease of use, costs, innovativeness, and brand fit. The discussion led to an unanimous decision for working principle 4; the roll top closure. Using this principle, a working prototyped is designed and built. Figure 80 gives an impression of the prototyping process. I am pleased to say that the prototype proved the proper functioning of the product's working principle.

## 08.01.02 Legal issues

For a product to infringe on a patent, all parts of the claims must meet (Patent attorney J.J. Hutter, personal

communication, 20 March 2018). An online research brought up some patents that involve the use of a vacuum compartment to store clothing. Though, none of the patents' claims fully match this product proposal's principles. Thus, the working principle, as presented, does not infringe.



Figure 80. An overview of the prototyping process



Figure 81. Airtight closure principles

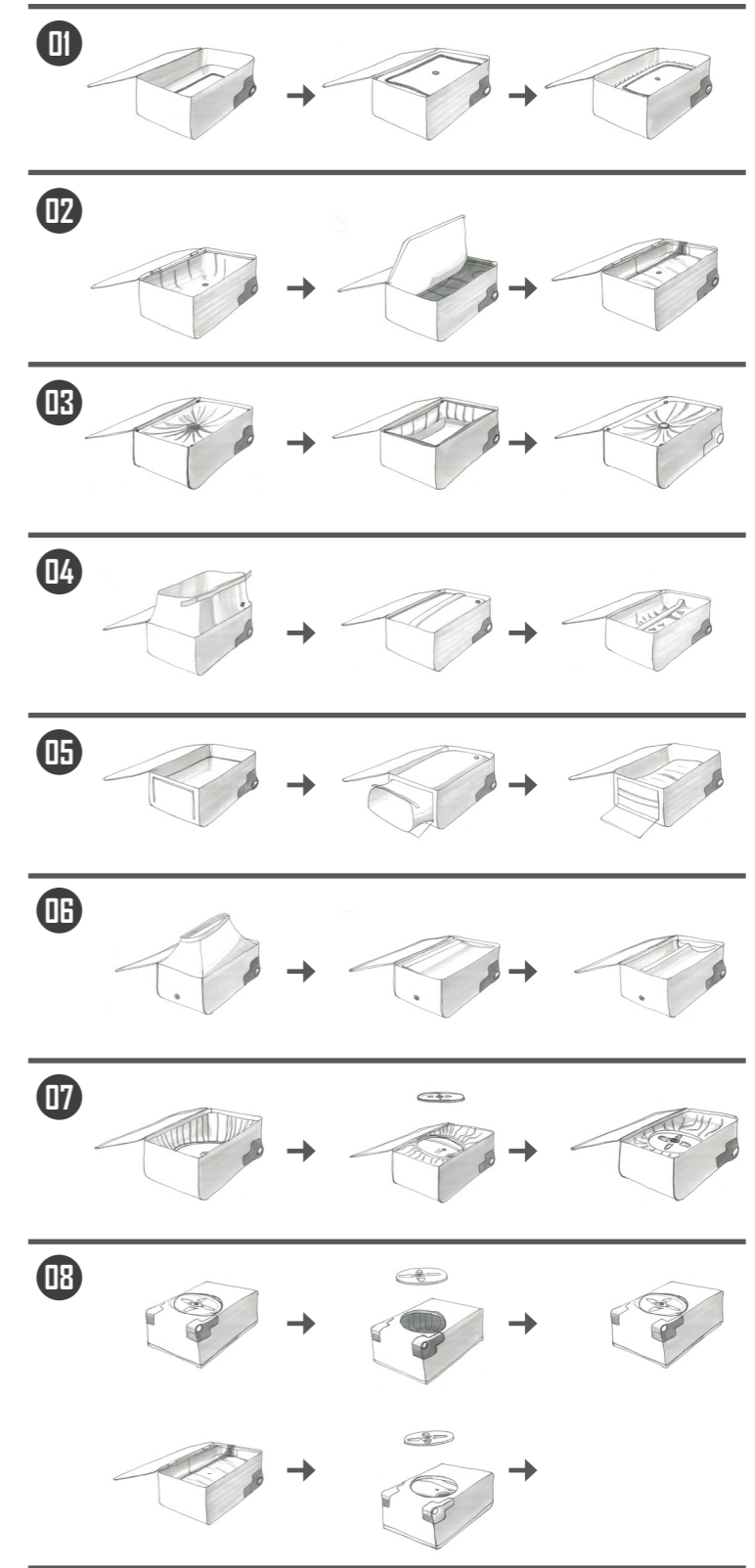


Figure 82. Vacuum compartment trolley working principles



CH. 08.02 ADVERTISEMENT

EMBRACE  
THE AIR



AIR COMPRESS TROLLEY

HIGH-FREQUENCY WELDED SEAMS // ROLL TOP CLOSURE // ONE-WAY AIR VALVE // VACUUM COMPARTMENT // DURABLE AND AIR-PROOF PU COATED NYLON // VACUUM PUMP // VACUUM CLEANER FRIENDLY

SHOWCASE



'TECH  
TRAVEL  
COMPRESSED  
EMBRACE THE ELEMENTS



## CH. 08.03 PRICE POSITIONING

It is well-known that the price of a product strongly influences a customer's buying behaviour. Therefore, a price is estimated at which the air compress trolley can be put to the market. It is safe to say that the trolley offers a useful competitive feature. But, for this competitive feature to become a competitive advantage, it should not have too much impact on the product's price. This chapter goes into the change in price, based on the cost of similar products. Then, it discusses the effect of this change on the product's position in the market.

### 08.03.01 Estimated production cost

The first step in estimating the extra manufacturing cost is understanding the relation between manufacturing price and selling price. Joffrey Delfgaauw (personal communication, 13 March 2018) says, that an estimated 1/6th of the non-sale retail price is the price at which Brunotti purchases from their manufacturers. This number helps to estimate the manufacturing cost of the vacuum compartment.

Brunotti compares best to the medium-high-end brands as shown in Figure 83. These brands are therefore taken as a starting point, assuming that they apply similar profit margins. Figure 83 shows that medium-high-end duffel bags sell between \$80 and \$100. In other words, the medium-high-end bags sell for approximately (\$90 ≈) €70 on average. This means that the bags are bought for an estimated (€70/6 ≈) €12 from the manufacturers.

The additional price at which the manufacturer will sell an integrated compartment is of course much lower than the price of a market-ready duffel-dry-bag. Thus, it must be feasible to keep the additional manufacturing price at (€12/2 ≈) €5. That is why it must be feasible to keep the additional selling price at (€5x6 ≈) €30. Figure 83 shows how this changes the positioning of the trolley, that is currently sold for €149,99 (Brunotti, n.d.).

### 08.03.02 New price position

Figure 83 shows to what products the trolley originally compared, and to which the air compress trolley compares. As these examples, and many others, make clear, the trolley keeps competing in the same market segment. The online comparison pointed out that the estimated difference in selling price is even lower than differences between the selling price of the exact same product on different websites.

### 08.03.03 Conclusion

Though the estimations in this chapter are very rough, they provide sufficient evidence to assume that the integrated vacuum compartment does not force the trolley into a completely different market segment. Thus, it is safe to say that competitive advantage can be achieved with the product. Of course, Brunotti could choose to deliberately position the trolley in much more high-end part of the market at much higher profit margins.

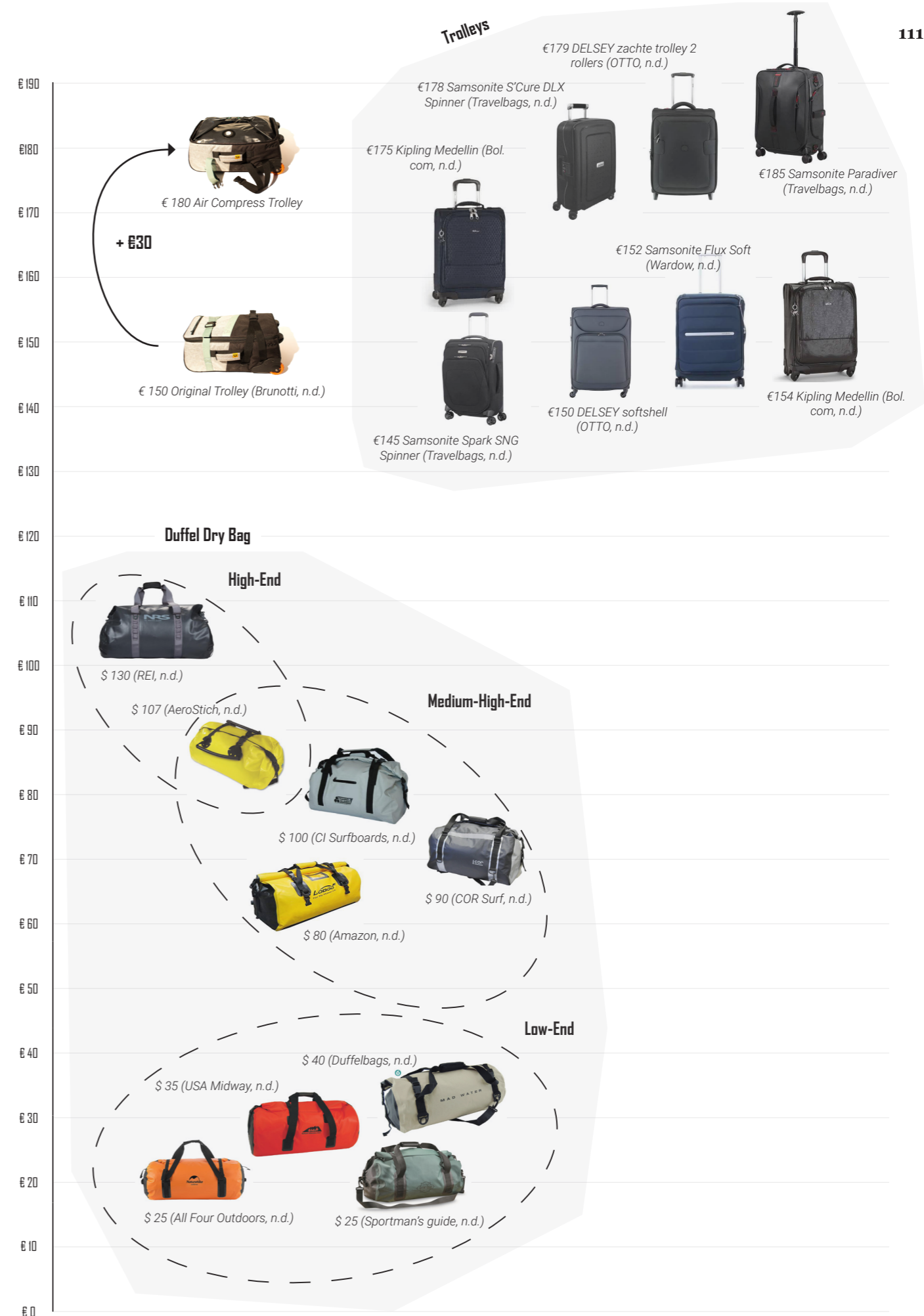
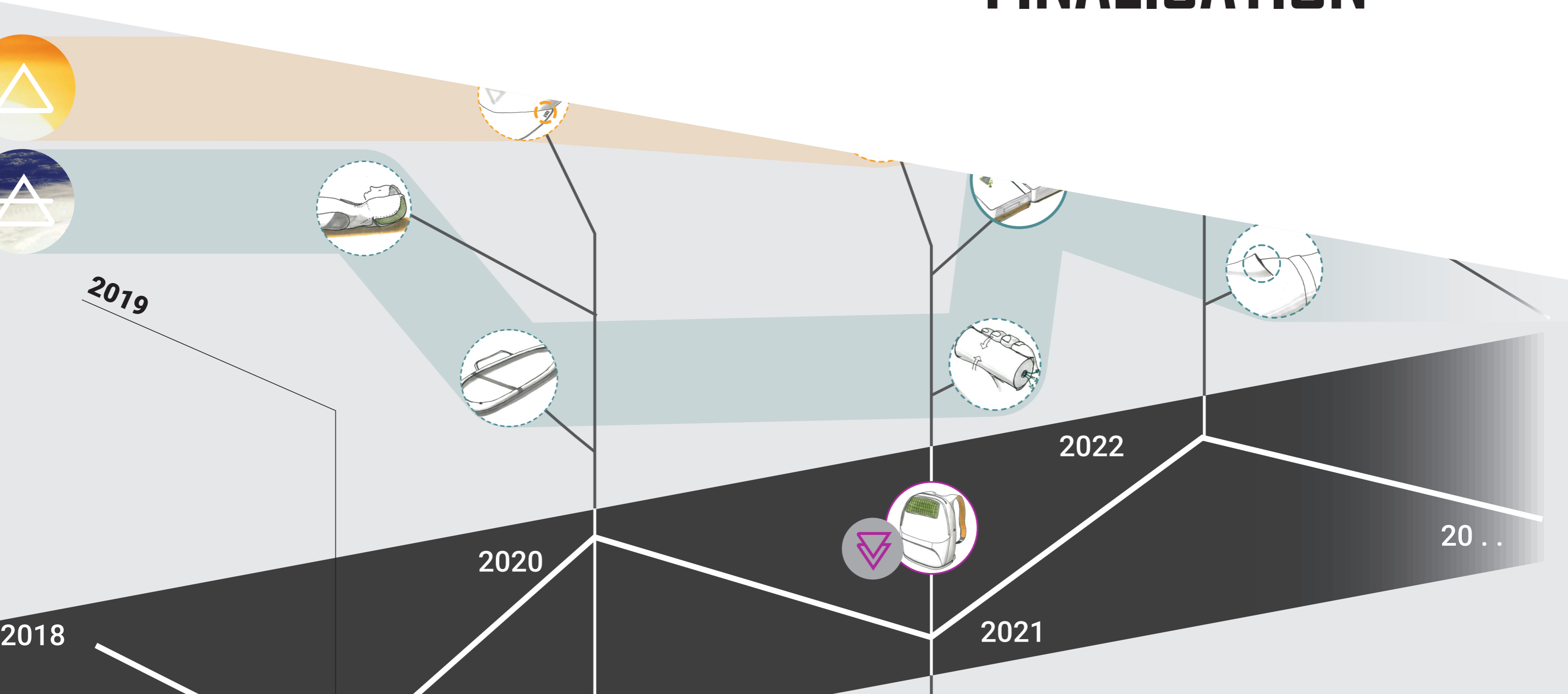


Figure 83. Non-sale retail prices of duffel dry bags and trolleys, and the change of the 'Air Compress Trolley's' price positioning



# 09 FINALISATION



## CH. 09.01 CONCLUSION

Throughout this report, many conclusions are drawn; think of the brief conclusions at the end of each chapter and the conclusions drawn from the brand perception analysis. This chapter concludes on the entire design project. In other words, this chapter concludes on how well the project goals, as established in CH. 01.01, are achieved.

### 09.01.01 Project goal

As stated in CH. 01.01, the goal of this project is: “to reveal Brunotti’s brand inconsistencies and, accordingly, propose a product innovation strategy that (1) helps eliminating these inconsistencies and (2) helps gaining competitive advantage”. Figure 84 gives a graphical representation of the project’s outcome, that relates back to the visualised project goal in Figure 01.

### 09.01.02 Reveal Brunotti’s brand inconsistencies

The brand perception analysis points out some critical gaps between Brunotti’s intentions and the customers’ perception. The beginning of this report points out why gaps are expected between the perception of Brunotti’s hardware- and apparel products. It also points out how the big differences between the hardware- and apparel customer groups are the expected cause of gaps between the groups’ perception of the brand.

Though this expectation proved to be partially true, the biggest gaps did not occur between the two product collections, nor between the two customer groups’ perception of the brand. In fact, the biggest gaps and thus most important points of focus, occurred between Brunotti’s intention and the customers’ overall (hardware and apparel combined) perception of the brand.

To be more precise, the most critical inconsistencies (gaps) between Brunotti’s intended and perceived identity occurred in terms of:

- **Quality.** The perceived quality is not low, but still consistently lower than intended. To reach a premium brand status, a higher perceived quality is desirable.
- **Innovative character.** The brand Brunotti and its products are perceived as far less innovative than intended. Being one of Brunotti’s core values, this sense of innovativeness needs to become much stronger in the minds of the customer.
- **Philosophy.** The brand perception analysis indicates a lower association with reliability and honesty than intended. This denotes a mismatch with Brunotti’s philosophy to support their customers ‘No Matter The Conditions’.

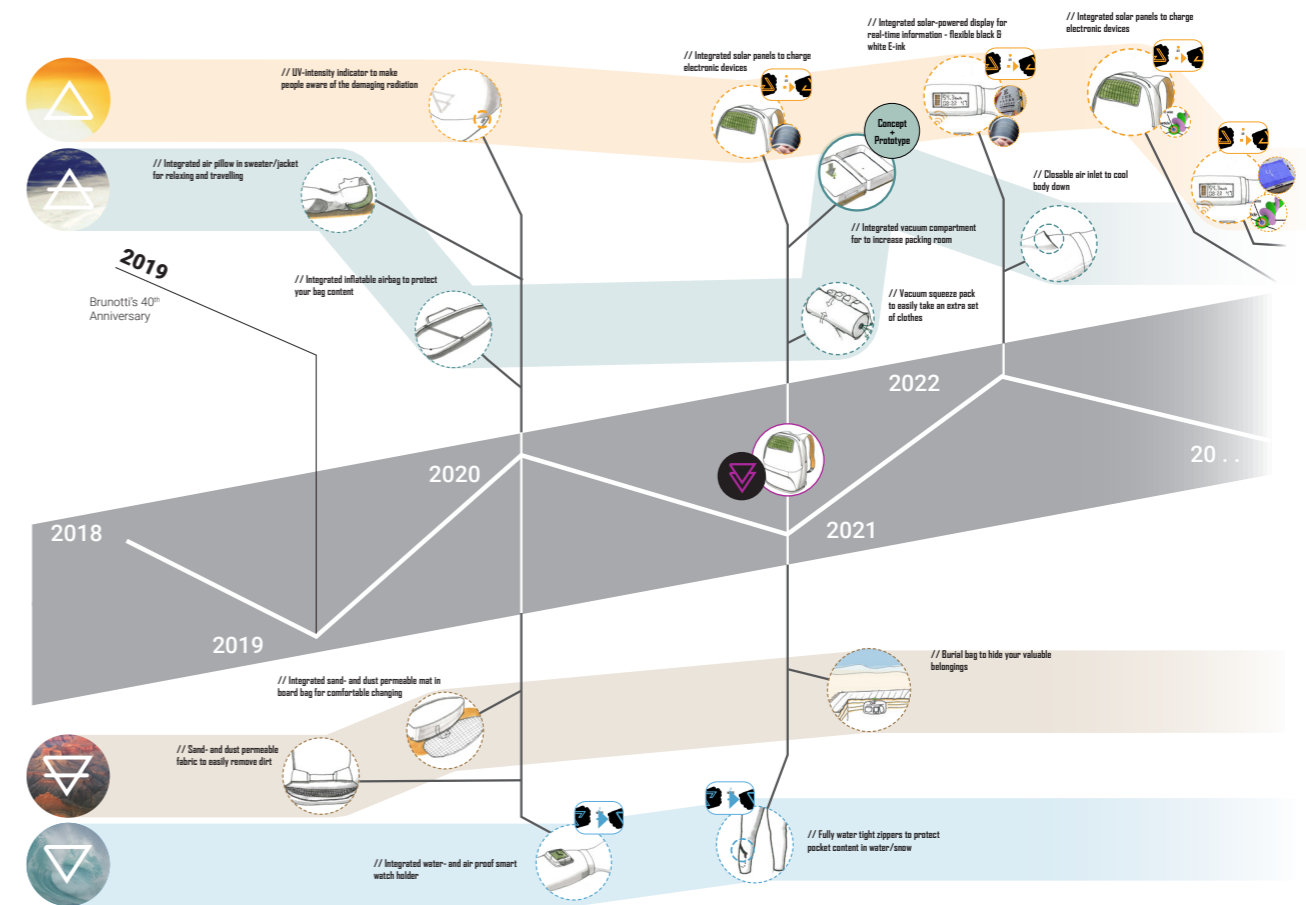


Figure 84. A graphical representation of the project's outcome

### 09.01.03 Help eliminating the identified inconsistencies

The ‘Embrace the Element’ strategy does certainly not eliminate all identified inconsistencies, which is nearly impossible. But it does help in eliminating them in several ways:

- The strategy is completely based on Brunotti’s ‘No Matter The Conditions’ philosophy. Building on their current philosophy, rather than introducing a new one, is in itself consistent.
- CH. 05.03 proves that the strategy can be employed on different brand-levels: The elements easily allow for classification of (1) Brunotti’s core (all boardsports), (2) all Brunotti products (both hardware and apparel), and (3) product features (the proposed innovations). Therefore, I argue that the strategy is in fact very suitable for creating more consistency throughout the brand.

- Most importantly, the strategy offers a consistent message throughout the brand, namely: “Designed to Embrace the Element”
- The large amount of proposed product-feature-ideas within the strategy, that scored high in terms of ‘innovativeness’, confirms the strategy’s capability of driving innovation. I am optimistic about the field of innovative opportunities that is not yet covered in this project. First of all, because many of the identified boardsporters’ problems were not yet solved in this assignment. And secondly, because the ideation phase was completed for project-deadline-reasons, and not because I could not come up with more ideas. Thus, there is much more room for meaningful innovation.

“ I am confident that the ‘Embrace the Elements’ strategy, together with the proposed innovations, contribute to achieving the project goals. ”

#### 09.01.04 Help gaining competitive advantage

Help gaining competitive advantage, was set as a separate project goal, but became an integral part of the design challenge. This specifically happened when ‘innovative’ became one of the most important requirements for this project’s solution space. As described in CH. 02.03, ‘innovative’ in this project means: technical product features that are new to market and contribute to commercial success from a product and marketing perspective. Thus, since many of the proposed features within the ‘Embrace the Elements’ strategy, score high in terms of innovativeness, the strategy does provide guidance for gaining competitive advantage. Moreover, the design challenge has functioned both to drive and assess ideas. This helped selecting the ideas with the highest potential competitive advantage.

It is important to emphasize that the classification-strategy in itself does not contribute to competitive advantage. The innovative product features, that fit in this classification, are the drivers for competitive advantage.

#### 09.01.05 Success of implementation

The conclusions drawn above, indicate that the strategy does in fact help in achieving the project’s goals. Though, one important aspect is hereby neglected; the chances of a successful implementation of the strategy. To put it simply, the expected positive effects of the strategic

proposal are nullified if the strategy is not implemented successfully. It is not easy to estimate the success of the strategy’s implementation, but the brand perception analysis’ results help doing so.

As explained in 02.02.01, if a brand has a high reputation in the mind of a customer, this customer is more likely to accept brand extensions (Hem et al., 2003). The chapter also explains that more innovative customers are quicker at accepting brand extensions (Keller, 2000). The literature does not provide a tool for calculating the chances of success, but merely points out a relation between the variables.

The research respondents give Brunotti an average score of 4,8/6 and they score 4,5/6 themselves in terms of their own innovative character. Though not perfect, the scores do not give any reason to assume that the strategic product innovations cannot be put the market successfully. It does imply that the customers are not yet ready for radical brand extensions. Fortunately, none of the proposed features identifies as such.

#### 09.01.06 Concluding

To conclude, I am confident that the ‘Embrace the Elements’ brand-consistency and product-innovation strategy, together with the proposed innovations, contribute to achieving the project goals. The impact of the strategy depends on the implementation of the strategy. CH. 09.03 goes into more detail on this matter.

## CH. 09.02 LIMITATIONS

This chapter goes into the limitations of this project’s analyses and results. The limitations are not critical, but still important with regard to report’s interpretations.

#### 09.02.01 Questionnaire setup

The brand perception questionnaire was intended for distribution via Brunotti’s communication channels. Therefore, Brunotti’s brand manager has had great influence in its setup. As a result, several changes had to be made to the intended questionnaire, before being allowed to use Brunotti’s communication channels. The changes, that have had an effect on research outcomes, are listed hereafter.

##### Likert Scales

The Likert-scales, used in the online questionnaire, were initially odd. The underlying idea was to give the participants the option of expressing neutrality. Though, even scales had to be used. Neither of the options is good, nor bad. But the decision does affect the research’ outcomes.

Whereas an even scale might force the respondents to choose a direction, it subsequently leads to a less nuanced representation of the respondents’ opinion and could lead to dissatisfaction, and as a result to higher drop-out rates (Survalyzer, n.d.).

##### Brand personality

Some personalities on Aaker’s (1997) scales needed to be altered. Hence, ‘Imaginative’ became ‘Creative’, ‘Upper Class’ became ‘High Class’, and ‘Outdoorsy’ became ‘Adventurous’. The underlying idea was to make the personalities easier to understand for the respondents.

Also, initially the brand personalities were to be scored on a Likert-scale. They had to be changed into multiple answer - multiple choice - type of questions. The possible effect is a poorer understanding of Brunotti’s perceived personality, because all personalities became simple check-boxes. Therefore, it does not give insight into the extent to which Brunotti embodies each personality in the perception of each customer.

#### 09.02.02 Questionnaire distribution

As explained, the questionnaire was intended to be distributed via Brunotti’s communication channels. To be more precise, the questionnaire was supposed to be emailed to Brunotti’s customer database. After a few weeks, this turned out to be impossible within Brunotti’s communication policy. I was therefore forced to get responses via other channels. The limitations that this has led to are discussed hereafter.



### Customer group representation

The hardware responses are obtained via waterboardsport forums. It is therefore safe to say that they represent Brunotti's hardware customer well. Though, it is important to point out the extreme gender distribution. A whopping 96% of the hardware respondents is male. Though the group is known to be dominated by men, this number is extreme.

The apparel responses are mostly obtained via my own social channels. Though the respondents do fit the apparel customer description, the group is somewhat homogeneous. This especially shows in the apparel respondents' age- and residential distribution. Fortunately, the most important research findings rely on the customers' overall perception, instead of the differences between the hardware and apparel customer.

### Number of apparel respondents

Finding out that emailing Brunotti's customer base was impossible after a few weeks, has also led to less responses than expected. Especially, the amount of 87 apparel respondents is statically low. Again, this does not critically affect the most important findings, because those findings concern the responses of the apparel and hardware responses combined.

### Number of employee respondents

After two internal mailings, the number of employee responses got to the final 30. This number is statically insufficient, but already but already accounted for.

The employee responses merely served to give some quantified confirmation of Brunotti's intended identity, that already arose from the brand analysis. Despite being somewhat divided on some matters, the employees did quantify the expected identity.

### 09.02.03 Embrace the Elements strategy

#### Embrace the Earth features

As becomes clear from Figure 76 on page 98, compared to the strategy's other elements, 'Embrace the Earth'-innovations are only applicable to a few products. A stronger embodiment of the class, and thus a stronger embodiment of the strategy on a product-feature level, might require more earth innovations.

#### Embrace the Elements on a product level

Though the 'Embrace the Elements' classification proved to be well applicable to most of Brunotti's products, not all their products easily classify as such. Especially Brunotti's bags (bag packs, board bags and travel bags) do not allow for easy classification. Their central position in Figure 53 on page 73 indicates that they might get in touch with all four elements, but also that do not easily classify.

On a more general note, the 'Embrace the Elements' classification of Brunotti's products is not exact, but merely an interpretation. Which product fits into which class is therefore debatable.

## CH. 09.03 RECOMMENDATIONS

Everything after Section 04 (brand perception analysis) is basically part of this project's recommendations. This chapter covers several overarching recommendations that arose from or during this design assignment. The focus of these recommendations varies from recommendations on implementing the strategy to much more general suggestions.

### 09.03.01 Implementation

Except for the one prototyped concept (Section 08), all innovative product feature proposals are still on an 'idea-level'. This was already touched upon in CH. 07.02. It also explains that they are therefore still far from being ready for development, let alone for market introduction. The strategy's effect on consistency relies on the implementation of innovations within all four element classes. Furthermore, the impact of the strategy relies on its implementation on a product- and brand-core (boardsport) level as well. The strategy's detailed implementation is out of this project's scope. However, I recommend Brunotti to take the following actions:

1. Determine how the 'Embrace the Elements' strategy can be implemented on a boardsport- and product level. The most obvious way to do so, is through digital, physical and verbal communication, for examples: in brochures, on their website, in stores and at events. The proposed element markings and 'Embrace the Elements' message are hereby steppingstones.

2. Assess what ideas are worth bringing into a further stage of development. Figure 78 on page 101 (action-priority-matrix) can help in making these decisions. Brunotti should, hereby, make sure that all elements are covered for the message to be complete.
3. Start conceptualising and prototyping these ideas, together with IDE students and/or manufacturers.
4. Figure 01 on page 17 indicates how Brunotti's 40th anniversary next year can play a role in introducing the strategy. Considering the estimated 19-month development period, as stated in CH. 07.03, it is nearly impossible to launch the 'Embrace the Elements' product features during this anniversary. Though, implementation by means of communication on the other brand levels is in fact feasible on such short notice.

### 09.03.02 User-centeredness

As briefly touched upon in CH. 05.02, many pains of a boardsport lifestyle came up in a short time span during the exploratory session with four boardsporters. Moreover, the boarders were forced to stop listing pains due to time constraints. The solutions in this design assignment are nowhere near solving all the identified pains. This indicates that there is still much to gain, using a user-centred design approach.

Brunotti is already applying user-centred design with their ‘Rider Developed Products’ (RDP). But I recommend employing user-centred design methods and approaches to a much greater extent. The fact that so many pains are unanswered by neither Brunotti nor their competitors’ products, confirms a great opportunity for Brunotti to gain competitive advantage. It gives them the opportunity to truly carry out their “No Matter The Conditions” philosophy and offer value for the customer that none of their competitors do.

### 09.03.03 In-house workshop

‘New-to-the-market’ and certainly ‘new-to-the-world’ ideas have the ability to give companies great competitive advantage. But, they do entail challenges in the development process. Whereas existing working-principles and designs can often be copied, slightly altered, and then pushed into development, ‘new’ ideas typically ask for much more initial research and several physical iterations. Brunotti currently outsources most prototyping to their manufacturers. This is time consuming and poorly allows for quick iterations in the prototyping process.

Therefore, considering the aim for new-to-the-market solutions, I recommend Brunotti to setup a workshop in which ideas can quickly be prototyped. Furthermore, an in-house workshop could propagate Brunotti’s innovativeness to visiting retailers. In my view, the

workshop could be the 21st -century interpretation of Claudio’s boardshape room. A less effective, but on the other hand, less risky option would be new collaborations with IDE students or student groups.

It is important to mention that this recommendation particularly goes for Brunotti’s headquarters. I do not have complete insight into Brunotti’s prototyping efforts at their hardware development in Scheveningen. This recommendation might already be met in some ways that I do not know of.

### 09.03.04 Positioning

If Brunotti brings truly innovative products to the market, keeps focusing on high-quality, and achieves to plant this into the minds of their customers, I am confident that they can position their products in the high-end of the market. As a result, they can reach an A-brand status. Perhaps this has already been discussed extensively throughout the report, but I recommend Brunotti to:

- Keep aiming for high-quality products.
- Aim for truly innovative solutions, as are proposed in this report for example.
- Keep going out there and show their innovative products to the world.

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